NEWS / A2
WORLD / A19
SUNDAY MAGAZINE
METRO / A17

INDEPENDENT

Candidates for Senate in alphabetical order

Richard "Dante" Bunoan
Born April 7, 1966, Manila. Married. Education: UP Diliman-entrepreneurship (short course); NYU Film School of Continuing Education. Occupation: Director, cinematographer, author. Advocacy: Anti-illegal drugs

Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan
Born March 14, 1948, Baguio City. Married. Education: AM, MBA, PMA '71. Occupation: Senator, 1995-2007. Advocacy: AFP/PNP reforms, good gov't

Philippine Green Republican Party

Feliz "Pinoy" Cantal
Born May 15, 1949, Dimas City. Education: Oxford University, PhD Political Economics; MLGS, Law, Occupation: Economist, businessman. Advocacy: education, judicial reforms

US House

of Representatives, Senate hold separate hearings on RP human rights violations March 14

FBI admits

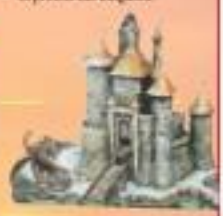
breaking privacy laws to help investigate suspected terrorists

AGELESS:

The mystique of older women; How Armida Siguion-Reyna finally found her groove and decided to look her age. Plus, Ballroom Dancing 101.

He builds castles

in the air complete with the highest turret down to the drawbridge, and not to forget a dragon to protect the kingdom.



PHILIPPINE Sunday INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Sunday, March 11, 2007 ** Vol. 22 / No. 93 www.inquirer.net

Pinoys bad at lying, can't talk sex to kids, says UP study

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

MOST FILIPINOS ARE NOT GOOD AT LYING AND PARENTS ARE NOT comfortable discussing sex, drugs and alcohol with their children.

PHOTO A7

BEAUTY AMONG THE RUINS: The patterns of an ancient seaport in Silay City, Negros Oriental, outline the magnificence of the sunset in a city that was once one, vast sugar plantation. EDWIN BACASMAS

Police raid Satur home

One stroke, everything changes, beauty emerges

By Ms. Cores P. Deya

WITH ONE STROKE. AS WITH former president of the University of the Philippines and one-time National Security Adviser Emanuel "Noel" Soriano, or with anyone, everything could change with one stroke, a brain stroke.

Discovering meaning and purpose in the aftermath of the disabling blow is consolation enough. But translating these into beauty is indeed a grand response to God's hello. And it takes a village, a community of caring persons, to make this happen.

"It took a whole nation," Noel's wife Angge said, expressing her gratitude.

In July 1986, Noel suffered a stroke that rendered him paralyzed and unable to speak. After three months in the hospital, he was brought home. His wife Angge, a jovial, brave and take-charge type, and their four sons and two daughters were all there for him. But it would take several years before they could get an idea how his hope could take them.

Last week, Noel, who just turned 70, held his third exhibit, "A Fisherman's Story," of watercolor paintings at the UP's Delaney Hall. This was something not quite planned, Angge told the enthused crowd, but Noel's persistence (through one-word grants, signs and body language) paid off.

One was for sure, the prayers

GMA A9

THERE'S A STORY to tell about daring fishermen in a turbulent sea according to the art of Emanuel Soriano. His forever colleague in the Cory Cabinet, then-Defense Secretary Fidel Ramos drops in at his third exhibit ongoing at UP's Delaney Hall.

CHRIS ROBERT

Also searched neighbors but didn't find solon

By Alcain Papa

THE POLICE CAME CALLING, brandishing assault rifles, jumping over the gate, and then looking under beds, even peeking into the ceiling.

But they found no trace of Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo, a militant lawmaker accused of murders that occurred 23 years ago while he was being held in a maximum security jail.

In a surprise raid yesterday morning, some 20 policemen armed only with a photocopy of an arrest warrant, also searched the houses of Ocampo's neighbors on Gen. De Jesus Street in Herrera Hill, Quezon City.

"They turned their way in without my permission. They climbed our gate, looked inside the closets and under the beds. They even knocked on the ceiling and searched our storerooms," wife Carolina "Bebbie" Malay told the reporters.

"The only place they didn't look was under my skirt," she repeatedly told The Associated Press by telephone.

Malay said the raiders climbed the family's 8-foot high gate to get in.

"Maybe they like action films and fancy

POLICE A8

Art heals 'Reming' children in Bicol: To imagine is to hope

By Rob Cantevras

IS THERE ROOM FOR ART IN AN EVACUATION center? Can creativity still spring from the silence of a rape victim or the shame of a prostituted woman? Is what if an orphan dwellers, so if a battered wife prefers her sky red and not blue?

Perhaps the answers can be gleaned from a drawing by 10-year-old Francis Basas who saw his home vanish in the mudflow unleashed by Supertyphoon "Reming" in Albay on Nov. 30.

In an "art workshop" held last month not far from an evacuation center in Daraga town, Basas produced two pieces.

One depicted, in intense pen strokes, how the muddy torrent engulfed the houses and trees in his neighborhood, and how he—a tiny stick figure in the terrible scene—clung for dear life to the last tree standing.

The other is a happy, cartoon-like "family portrait" of the Basas household, including Francis' father and elder brother and sister who did not survive Reming. Notably absent in the drawing were his three other siblings who also died but whose bodies were never found.

"The three missing family members—the fact that he did not put them there—could mean that there's still no closure for the boy," art scholar Flaudette May Datuin said in the course of analyzing the outputs of the two-day workshop.

Datuin is part of a trio of women in the Philippine art community who believe they are helping distressed people who have needs that go beyond material or financial aid, physical care, or professional counseling.

Since March last year, Datuin, visual artist Alma Quinto and gallery owner Norma Lico-

ART HEALS A9

THE FIERCE LINES (at left) of Francis Basas, 10, stream from his memory of the torrential flooding of mud that engulfed trees and houses including his own. At extreme right, the green marks the spot where Francis is clinging for dear life to the lone tree standing.

DADDY'S GIRLS. Frankie, 6, and Mia, 3, with their favorite senator at mom's birthday concert last month.

No. 1 rating takes toll on Kiko's Frankie

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE 90 DAY CAMPAIGN PERIOD FOR the May senatorial elections has taken its toll on independent candidate Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan's daughter Frankie.

Pangilinan, who topped the Social Weather Stations' latest survey on senatorial preferences, admitted that being No. 1 in the poll did not come easy especially to members of his family.

NO. 1 RATING A6

One product, one town: Local yet global

By Ranneil W. Domingo

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO MAKE P5,000 grow into P5.5 million?

Just 58 pairs of rifle hands.

Until 1998, the wives of farmers and fishers in Tabigon town in Bohol used to sit out their days just waiting for their husbands to return from work. At times, some of them would get a chance to add to their families' income by selling fish in the neighborhood.

But they never had a sustained means of earning money.

Then, in 1998, they were organized into the Tabigon Loomweavers Association.

With a P5,000 grant from the municipal government and the rudiments of weaving that had been passed down for generations, the women built an enterprise that is now the Tabigon Loomweavers Multi-purpose Cooperative (TLMPC).

After years of self-improvement and hard work, P5,000 is what each member earns monthly from the business.

The Tabigon undertaking is part of the One Town One Product (Otop) program, which collectively accounted for P1.81 billion in domestic sales and $92.23 million in export revenues in 2006.

Trade Undersecretary Carlos Cruz-Evangelista, coordinator of the pro-

ONE PRODUCT A6

A1
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
SUNDAY, MARCH 11, 2007

SEE CHART
33 11 | 6 7 5 6 7 4
Mid-Day SUERTRES Evening
3 7 2 | 3 4 2
6/42 LUZON VIS-MIN
8 16 26 27 28 31
P14,446,197.00

Second
FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Isolated thunder showers in the afternoon or evening

Gov't offers Moros right to self-rule

CAMP DARAPANAN, SULTAN KUDARAT—THE government has offered Muslims in Mindanao the right of self-determination, a move that the head of the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front said was a breakthrough in the talks to end one of the world's longest running Muslim insurgencies.

Negotiations between government and rebel teams have been stalled since September, but there have been informal contacts.

In one such meeting in Cotabato, the government offered to recognize the right of the Muslims to self-determination, which it has never done in over three decades of conflict and nonsensitive negotiations.

"This is a breakthrough, we feel it is an advancement in the search for peace in Mindanao," MILF chair Ibrahim Murad told reporters in his jungle camp yesterday.

"It is a breakthrough, it is a break away from the past," Rudy Rodil, a history professor who is on the government's panel, told reporters in nearby Cotabato City.

"I don't see how much further we can go," he said.

The proposal has still to be discussed in formal talks, but both sides said there could take place within weeks, most likely in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

According to Rodil, the proposal would allow an autonomous Muslim state self-governance in all areas except defense, foreign affairs, the monetary system and the postal system.

"They will have to remain in the Philippines. We are not authorized to divide the country," he said.

A government policy deal in 1996 with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), the country's oldest Muslim rebel group, did not go as far, although it did create a special region for Muslims, the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

But the MNLF has split into various factions, and the 1996 deal is widely seen as ineffective.

"The experience of the MNLF is obviously enough," said Murad, the MILF chief, adding that his negotiating team would nail down as many details and commitments from the government as possible.

Rodil said the new offer was made based on an article in the Constitution that enshrines international law as the law of the land. Since the Philippines was a signatory to an international agreement on recognizing the right of indigenous groups to self-determination, it could make the offer, he said.

But both sides said several hurdles remain before an agreement can be hammered out.

The MILF wants an expansion of the ARMM to include other Muslim-majority areas in the south, and the two sides are at odds over the number of villages to be included and contiguity.

Furthermore, some parts of the proposal may have to be approved by the Congress, which the MILF will have to win over, the MNLF and local Muslim chieftains.

They will also have to ensure that intermittent clashes do not wreck any deal. It was of the worst bouts of violence in recent months, at least 20 people were killed in a gun battle between government troops and MILF supporters near Cotabato City this week.

Murad, a mild-looking former rebel commander who won the MILF's former military chief, said it remains to armed struggle was unlikely.

"We know that we cannot do this overnight, we have to thrash out all the problems," he said.

"So long as it is moving, we are willing to continue the power process," he said.

Ebrahim Alfibe, the government's chief negotiator, said last week that the government hoped to resume formal peace talks with the MILF before the election on May 14. The talks, brokered by Malaysia since 2001, had stalled over the size and wealth of a proposed Muslim autonomy homeland.

In a March 2 news conference, Alfibe said there was already no informal understanding on the political aspect of the negotiations "but the issues on territory remained unresolved."

Since 2006, the 60-member monitoring team from Malaysia, Libya and Brunei has been deployed in Mindanao to sustain the July 2003 cease between security forces and the MILF rebels, preventing some skirmishes from developing into a full-blown shooting war.

At least 120,000 have been killed in the Muslim insurgency in Mindanao, the richest part of the country in terms of untapped natural resources, but urbanized the most impoverished.

Most of the country's roughly five million Muslims live in Mindanao, out of a total population of 87 million.

Reuters

Militants rap 'open season,' say they're ready to face it

MILITANT GROUP BY YESTERDAY assailed what they said was the start of an "open season" against leftists and political activists, but declared that they were prepared to counter it.

"We vehemently condemn the kind of hostile operations. The resurgence of martial law," Bayan Rafael Mariano of the Anakpawis party-list group said in motion to the claim of the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) and Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) that their offices were being monitored by military agents.

"It appears that, by blatantly using just the military it is open season against progressives," Mariano said in a statement.

Nilly Madrada, KMP national deputy secretary general and Anakpawis nominee, said the office of the militant farmers group had been monitored since Friday morning by government agents in motor vehicles.

Ready and alert

Like Bonaire, KMU executive vice president and also Anakpawis vice president for Luzon, said a man in a white Tamaraw FX car parked outside the labor alliance's headquarters in Pasig City, Quezon City, and took pictures of the building's facade and entrance.

Umanos said KMU members had also noticed teenagers loitering outside the office and at nearby stores and display terminals.

"We are not new to this kind of harassment initiated by government agents. We are ready and alert all the time, and in fact have confidence in our mass organizations," he said in a statement.

Umanos said some teenagers had attempted to deliver a statement to Rafael Baylosis, KMU vice president for external affairs and also an officer of Anakpawis, who is included in the list of persons charged with multiple murder along with Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo.

The KMU will protect leaders and of all kinds of the group "from any illegal arrest and actions by the government," Umanos said.

He recalled the fate of KMU founding chair and Anakpawis Rep. Crispin Beltran, who remains in detention after his arrest a year ago for alleged rebellion.

Mariano said the purported increased surveillance and harassment of leaders of progressive party-list and people's organizations were "a harbinger of crackdown on the legal left."

Rafael Mariano: "They are really out to scare and intimidate us. Their objective is to neutralize our operations and advocacy and for Gloria [President Macapagal-Arroyo] to remain in power."

Umanos said that apart from "acts of provocation" against high-profile leaders of Anakpawis, its local organizers and members had been experiencing harassment and intimidation.

Soldiers on bike

He said that in Tagaig, an Anakpawis member was chased by soldiers on motorcycles last Thursday and barely escaped.

In Batangas, Gigi Ramirez, provincial coordinator of Anakpawis and deputy secretary general of KMP-affiliate Samahang ng mga Magsasaka in Batangas, said soldiers had been harassing her and other community organizers.

Umanos said leaders of the Anakpawis affiliate Kilusang ng mga Manggagawa Makibrisyo also continued to be harassed by soldiers in urban poor communities in Commonwealth and Payatas, Quezon City.

But Mariano said the attacks on militant organizations would not work in favor of the Arroyo administration's supposed plans to remove leftist party-list groups from Congress.

"The Filipino people are more than determined to oust their present state against a fascist, corrupt and pepper regime," he said.

Jaymee Anday

BOY SCOUTS' PEACE RELAY

Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay (center), national president of the Boy Scouts of the Philippines, leads scouts from the Asia-Pacific region in the culmination of the Boys' Peace Relay at the Bonifacio Shrine near Manila City Hall on Saturday. From country to country, each segment of the flame is carried by a group of scouts who travel by land, sea and air. The Philippines is the last leg of the relay which aims to heighten awareness for peace in the region.

DEAN OF CARTOONISTS CITED

Bandolaje V. Alcala (center), widow of pioneer cartoonist Laura "Larry" Alcala, receives a posthumous Presidential Medal of Merit on behalf of her husband. A social satirist, Alcala created 20 comic strips, including the popular "Kalabog en Bosyo," "Mang Anton," "Inspektor," "Boy ang Aksaya" and "Diez el Lib." The Gloriano Fine Arts graduate of the University of the Philippines will receive at the close of Philippine Centennial Year a National Artist award in 2001. He died in 2002 at 73. Also present at the awarding in Malacañang were Alcala's son Laurin Jr., daughter-in-law Marietes (left), granddaughter Ana and sister Helena A. Obiol. Other cartoonists who received the presidential award as part of the National Arts Month celebration were Antonio Velasquez, Mars Ravelo, Francisco Coching and Carlo Caparas.

LPG prices slashed by 56 centavos

FOR THE SECOND TIME THIS month, oil firms slashed the prices of liquefied petroleum gas by 56 centavos a kilogram, citing the decline in the international wholesale price of LPG.

Pearl Gas, and Chevron Philippines Inc. cut prices by the same level at 12:01 a.m. today.

Data from the Department of Energy showed that the international contract price of LPG dropped by $20 per metric ton (MT) this month to $506 per MT from $526 per MT in February.

The end of the winter season in the western hemisphere contributed to the drop in international prices, as LPG is seasonally used as a heating fuel by western countries.

The cheaper prices also helped bring down the overall price for local LPG suppliers, giving them leeway to cut LPG prices.

The price of LPG in the international market was higher in January at $548.50 per MT compared to its December 2006 price of $480.50 per MT.

The highest ever LPG international contract price was recorded at its February last year at $622.50 per MT.

With the price adjustment, 11-kg LPG cylinders now cost P1,10 less.

Today's price reduction is the fourth for the year, with two of the price cuts taking place last month.

Oil firms have so far slashed LPG prices this year by a total of P5.24 per kg.

LPG prices now range between P665.65 and P695.64 per 11-kg cylinder, inclusive of the 12-percent value-added tax. Abigail L. Ho

Pinay's kin still in dark about her whereabouts

By Tarra Quismundo

SAID COULD BE TAKING REFUGE

In her hometown, stunning incognito in a Manila Manila neighborhood, or hiding in Nigeria.

One thing is certain is the country behind the disappearance of Filipina businesswoman Anabelle Fonacier. No one knows where she is.

While the Department of Foreign Affairs has requested that Fonacier returned to the Philippines on a flight to Manila on February 20, it's her family in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, is in the dark about her whereabouts.

"We haven't heard from her. My sister hasn't contacted us... On the one hand, we are happy that at least she's alive. But she hasn't called us yet," Jane Gregorio, Fonacier's younger sister, told the Inquirer in a phone interview yesterday.

"I had some eye-opening for her call... We suspect her decision not to call us yet. She might have her reasons for keeping quiet," Gregorio added in Filipino.

Fonacier, a resident of Nigeria for 17 years, was reported kidnapped on Feb. 7 by her former husband, Manuel Fonacier.

But the DFA said on Friday that while the supposed kidnapping occurred amid a spate of abductions of foreign nationals in oil-rich Nigeria, Fonacier's case was not part of the statistics.

The DFA has ordered the case to the Department of Justice for investigation.

Fonacier's alleged abduction occurred a day after nationalist gunmen took hostage Filipino oil worker Fernando Baraldo, 53, while en route to the Owerri airport for his Lagos-bound flight.

Before was released on Thursday, but details of his return to the country have yet to be announced.

In-law's call

Gregorio said all the family knew was based on "the call of my brother-in-law (Fonacier's husband) that my sister had been kidnapped."

"I don't know about the report that she was sent to Germany... But my brother-in-law would not make up stories," Gregorio said.

"But if she is already here, then we expect her decision not to contact us. We are going for this, but of course we are worried," added Gregorio, one of Fonacier's two younger siblings, who recalled having "a happy conversation" with her on the phone in the last week of January.

Gregorio said her brother-in-law with whom Fonacier has two children, has yet to contact the family. "We are still waiting whether he had been informed of the DFA report ruling out abduction in Fonacier's case.

Of several Filipinos reported abducted in Nigeria since January, Fonacier is the only one yet to be released.

Abducted Pinoy in southern Nigeria kidnapped by armed men off the oil-rich Delta State in southern Nigeria recovered in the Philippines last month.

Partial lifting

Labor Secretary Arnaiz Jones yesterday announced the partial lifting of the ban on the deployment of Filipino workers to Nigeria and Lebanon.

Arnaiz said the decision to partially lift the ban was on the basis of the "improved" security conditions in the two countries. What a report from Arnaiz is being

Leviste, docs could face contempt raps

FORMER BATANGAS GOVERNOR ANTONIO LEVISTE was scheduled back to the Makati City jail sometime after more than two weeks in a hospital.

Leviste, the nephew of Caltex oil baron Rafael de las Alas, arrived at the jail at about 1:30 p.m. yesterday, four days after the Makati Regional Trial Court had directed jail warden Supt. Isidro Ubiña to return him to his cell.

Rtc Presiding Commissioner Winnie de Pablo asked the court to cite Leviste and his doctor for contempt for failing to heed the court order.

Delano yesterday said the government would pursue the contempt charges against Leviste and his two Makati Medical Center (MMC) doctors, Reynato Rasdag and Ramon Libon, for defying the court.

The 67-year-old Leviste was detained at the Makati jail since Feb. 8 while awaiting trial for the non-bailable charge of murder for the fatal shooting of Rolando De las Alas, on Jan. 12.

He was allowed leave on Feb. 23 to check into the MMC for treatment of hypertension and gastrointestinal bleeding.

Velasco said Rasdag and Libon had endorsed Leviste's discharge from the hospital on March 7.

"They failed not only the court but the people as well. They made a mockery of the criminal justice system," he said.

"They know we mean business. They should not mess with us and we will not lose. Note to file criminal cases against them, including the MMC, for meddling an accused in a murder case," Velasco said.

On his arrival at the Makati jail yesterday, a four-person team from the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology took Leviste to the infirmary where a nurse checked his blood pressure. It was 130/over 90.

Ubiña, the jail warden, said they were keeping close tabs on Leviste's condition.

"His complexion is not as pale as before. his color has returned. But his blood pressure is still a bit high, I think," he said.

He said Leviste would remain in the infirmary until his condition stabilized.

"His condition is still critical. His illnesses are recurring and we cannot say for sure when he will be returned to his cell," Ubiña said in a phone interview.

He said Leviste, pictured No. 3107, will only be returned to his cell "once he is feeling better."

Julie M. Aurelio

Suspected phone hackers nabbed

EIGHT SUSPECTED MEMBERS OF AN INternational telephone hacking syndicate involved in defrauding millions of dollars from phone companies in the United States were arrested by the police in simultaneous raids yesterday in six cities in Metro Manila.

Supt. Joaquin Alva of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group National Capital Region (CIDG-NCR) said the eight—four men and four women—were arrested in the raids conducted in Quezon City, Taguig, Pasay, Parañaque, Valenzuela, Caloocan and Manila.

The raids were carried out under a search warrant issued by Manila Judge Lucia Pura-garay of the Regional Trial Court's Branch 50.

Alva identified the leader of the group as Ahmad Zaheeb Dipsh Mirpuri, a 37-year-old Jordanian, who was arrested at his rented house in BF Homes in Parañaque City.

Mirpuri denied committing any crime, saying he lived off an allowance sent to him by his parents.

It was also learned that Mirpuri was arrested in 2000 for a similar offense in Makati City but the case was dismissed.

Another suspect was identified as Emma Joy Lumicao who was arrested in Cubao, Quezon City.

Recovered from the suspects were several telecommunications equipments.

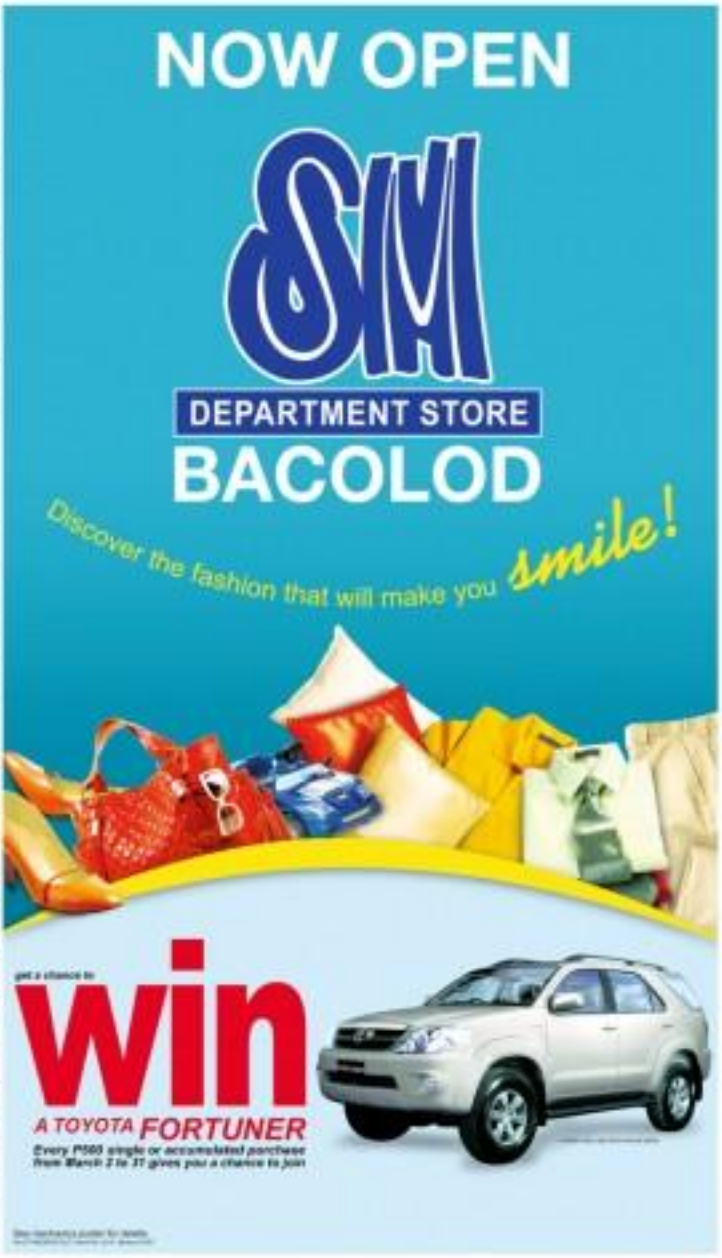
Police said the group operated a multimillion-dollar hacking operation worldwide.

According to Alva, the suspects stole phone numbers in the US and sold them worldwide for amounts ranging from $100 to $15,000.

"Anyone can use the numbers to make calls. The costs of the calls come up in the bills of the original owners. The operation is stopped when the line is cut," Alva said.

He added that the CIDG had been working on the case for the past three years now.

Alexis Romero



Cesar Montano not giving up

By Cynthia G. Balana and Tony S. Gargoles

TACBILARAN, BOHOL—ACTOR Cesar Montano yesterday said he had no intention of withdrawing from the senatorial race just because of his poor showing in the latest opinion surveys.

Speaking to reporters before the start of the administration Team Unity's campaign rally here, Montano said he was entertained to pursue his candidacy and expressed confidence that he would win.

"I will not be here if I'm not running. I will help in Team Unity's 12-0 victory," said Montano, a native of Bohol whose real name is Cesar Montalvo.

Montano has made his absence felt in several campaign sorties and some staffers of Team Unity candidates took this as a sign that the actor might be withdrawing from the race.

Sources in the Team Unity ticket said Montano's campaign has been bogged down by the lack of money and by the failure of the administration officials who are running the campaign to deliver the goods.

"It's the money," according to one source.

Montano, a popular movie actor who gave up a deal to appear in a P50-million TV series to unite to run, came out 18th in the latest Social Weather Stations poll of voter preferences.

Many more said funds promised for Montano have not been delivered.

It is estimated that for a senatorial candidate to mount an effective nationwide campaign, he or she would need from P150 million to P300 million.

Promised funds

A source close to the President said Gabriel Claudio, the presidential political adviser, had promised funds for the campaign and results-reports of librarians but failed to deliver those.

It was Claudio who brokered the deal for Montano so as to be senator under the administration ticket.

A source in Claudio's office said Montano was not the only Team Unity candidate to have complained about the delay in the release of funds.

"It's a common occurrence now in the administration ticket," said the source.

Two other candidates who are said to be complaining are Sonia Sin Gen Luis "Chavit" Singson and Jamalul Gimo.

The source shot to Mr. Arroyo said a group of business supporters of the President had contributed funds from which P88 million each was released to several candidates.

Late entry

Montano's late entry into the senate made him miss the release of the funds, the source said.

Several Team Unity candidates said the administration machinery was spending for hotel bookings, transportation and other campaign requirements.

Other candidates have been told to raise campaign funds for themselves, said the sources, and were not that dependent on the Lakas-NUCD, the main administration party.

Another Montano complaint, said a Lakas-NUCD official, was his being relegated to the background during campaign rallies despite his being the most popular of the candidates.

"He's not the main actor in these rallies. He's not the star," said one source.

This resulted to confusion people who think that Montano was just a draw by guest, said another source.

"They haven't associated him with his candidacy," said the source.

Gov. Erico Aumentado said the province was fully behind Montano's candidacy and that of another Boholano, Sonia Sin, a candidate of the Coalition Opposition.

Sin is the daughter of the late Bohol Rep. Odilo Mohammad and hails from this town.

Montano's father was a former law partner of Aumentado, Montano's family is from Sudayon town.

Aumentado said he told the President that he could not promise to deliver a 12-0 victory for Team Unity but only a majority vote.

"We will try as best we can and of course it is Team Unity's top target. But Bohol is definitely Arroyo country," the governor said.

Bohol has 480,000 voters but only 300,000 voted in the 2000 elections.

ACTOR-CESAR (Montano), shown here in Bohol, says he's still running, despite his poor showing in the surveys and a campaign that has been bogged down by a lack of money and the failure of officials running the campaign to deliver the goods.

Ralph: Vilma likely to heed clamor of Batangueños

By Cynthia G. Balana

DIXIE CITY—LIPA MAYOR VILMA Santos will likely heed the clamor of her supporters to seek the governorship of Batangas under the ruling Lakas-CMD, according to her husband, industrialist Ralph Recto.

Recto, who spoke with Manila-based reporters at the end of the two-day conference of the Philippine Consultants League here on Friday night, said his wife would announce her decision tomorrow, March 10, to end the month-long speculation.

"That is just my tip to you. What she said earlier was that she would not think as a wife, a mother, or an actress, but as a leader. What do you think a leader would do?" said Recto, who is running for his 4th term in the senate.

Recto, a candidate of the administration's Team Unity, said Santos "continued to pray" for divine guidance and had been receiving religious and political leaders.

"Anyone running for an important office, be it for governor or for senator, or even for councilor, needs a lot of prayers. You have to consult a lot of people. It is never an easy decision," he said.

Equity of incumbent

Reminded that Gov. Antonio Sanchez, who is now with Kampi, President Macapagal-Arroyo's party, would enjoy the administration's support based on the principle of the equity of the incumbent, Recto said Sanchez' foes would not solely on the people of Batangas.

He said the issue of the incumbent government had "no bearing" on Santos, who spoke with Manila-based reporters at the end of the two-day conference of the Philippine Consultants League here on Friday night, said his wife would announce her decision tomorrow, March 10, to end the month-long speculation.

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"Anyone running for an important office, be it for governor or for senator, or even for councilor, needs a lot of prayers. You have to consult a lot of people. It is never an easy decision," he said.

Governors' stand

Speaking for the League of Provinces of the Philippines, Governor Isaac Gov. Rex Bravo said the group had not made an official stand to back Recto if his wife were up against Sanchez.

Bravo, who is also the vice-governor of Team Unity, said some governors had only expressed their stand that they will support our colleague (Sanchez) in Batangas. But the league will not back Senator Recto," Bravo said in a phone interview.

Working majority

"Our official stand is to ensure a 12-0 victory for the administration because we want, at least, a working majority in the Senate to push President Macapagal-Arroyo's agenda," he said.

Bravo also said the governors were bound by the resolution they passed last Wednesday vowing to support the entire Team Unity ticket.

"Those just expressed their individual sentiments but our collective stand is to support all candidates," he said.

Bravo also was reacting to an interview report saying the governors would not support Bravo if Santos made a move.

Nadia Dora Benjamin Luang and Agusan del Sur Gov. Adolph Edward Plaza told the reporters that the governors stated their position during their Wednesday meeting, shortly before they headed to a dinner hosted by Pampanga Governor Lilia Pineda.

Luang said the governors' position was related to the President through Team Unity campaign manager Sen. Gregorio Honasan.

Report is on page A-8, column 1

How can bets recoup funds, Nikki asks

By Dona Z. Pazolanga

ZAMBOANGA OPPOSITION SENATORIAL candidate Aiza Seguerra "Nikki" Guingona said the public should look into the "morality" of candidates spending hundreds of millions of pesos in the election campaign.

Although trailing in the latest Social Weather Stations survey, Guingona said she will spend the same amount she spent in her two successful bids for the Senate more than a decade ago.

Guingona won a Senate seat for two terms, from 1992 to 1995, and from 1995 to 2001.

"When I decided to run again, I decided to spend exactly the same amount I spent before, because people already know me since My track record is there for all to see," she told the Inquirer.

P1.6M at stake

She said she spent "around P6 million, at most P10 million" in 1995, when she went under the Philippine People's Power Party banner.

Targeting more than that, here on Friday alone, Guingona said she spent at least P1.6 million.

Guingona said voters should consider how candidates who spend hundreds of millions for their campaign would eventually recoup their expenses.

A study by Sixbert Media Research Philippines showed that the top campaign spender is administration senatorial candidate Juan Ponce Enrile for Rep. Prospero Pichay, who spent P20.4 million for TV ads in the first two weeks of the campaign.

Reelectionist Senators Manuel Villar and Teofisto Guingona spent P20.29 million and P20.79 million, respectively, during the same period.

The Fair Election Act allows candidates to spend P3 for every registered voter, with around 45 million registered voters, each candidate may spend as much as P135 million.

ELECTION '07

US Congress to hear party-list group's plaint on extrajudicial killings

By Jovanie Aning

THE FOREIGN RELATIONS committees of both the United States House of Representatives and the US Senate will conduct separate hearings on the political killings in the Philippines.

Rep. Tom Lantos (California) will hold a briefing in the House foreign relations committee on the Philippine human rights issue at 10 a.m. on March 14 in Washington D.C., while Sen. Barbara Boxer (California), chair of the Senate subcommittee of the Senate, will also hold a hearing at 2:30 p.m. the same day.

Grassroots lobby

The 18 congressional hearings were the result of grassroots lobbying by Filipino-American organizations that included the United Methodist Church and the militant party-list group Bantala ng Mangggawang (PM).

The hearings also came on the heels of the recent critical statements by US Ambassador to the Philippines Thomas Dunlop and the US State Department on the human rights situation in the country.

PM researcher called on the US Congress to condemn the spate of extrajudicial killings of workers and peasant leaders in the Philippines.

The Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches yesterday also issued another statement condemning the extrajudicial killings.

Bad rap

"All the killings of journalists and left-wing advocates in recent times have given the Philippines a bad reputation; more important than the matter of reputation is the loss of precious lives," PCEC's executive committee said in a statement.

A representative of the PM, Pastor Israel Abrams of the United Methodist Church, will address on behalf of labor party-list group in the US Congress.

"We would like the US Congress to take note of the fact that the true hand of repression is buying down money on the working class movement in the Philippines," Abrams said.

Abrams will carry a letter of appeal from PM Rep. Satur Ocampo calling on the US Congress to speak against repression of human and labor rights.

Belly of beast

"We are willing to work in the belly of the beast in order to stop the iron hand of repression by the Arroyo regime and its fascist military. We talk our fellow Americans in solidarity with human rights and democ[illegible] in the Philippines," Magtubo said.

He added: It is in the common interest of the peoples of America and the Philippines. The killings of activists must stop. The ashes commemorate must be demilitarized. The hammocks of military party lists must end."

Abrams said that from the ranks of the PM alone, three labor union presidents plus its Rizal Regional Secretary General have been murdered since the assumption to power of President Macapagal-Arroyo. Another union president and leader of the PM was ambushed but survived during the state of commemorated Gen. Emilio Palparan in Leyte.

PCEC said it supported the investigation of the United Nations and the Philippine Government on Human Rights to establish the facts and find out the truth as well. It also praised the Supreme Court for setting up special courts to try cases of extrajudicial killings.

"We plead with ordinances to move forward and provide the evidence to counter the criminals; we appreciate the risks but how else can justice be served," PCEC added.

Watchdog would ban phone calls to ensure clean elections

By Tarra Quismundo

NO MORE "HELLO ... GARCI ING."

Under the action plan for clean and honest elections proposed by the newly organized Philippine Election Forum (PEF), it will be illegal for any public "election workers and officials to accept personal calls from political candidates."

The proposal is a dear response to the "Hello ... Garci" conversation between President Macapagal-Arroyo and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano in 2000 which sparked off a political crisis—Garcillano, who's two impeachment attempts and a failed coup—that lingers to this day.

This time around, one of 15 draft PEF resolutions declares that "all forms of election fraud, to the phone call prohibition should be logged," saying the name of the caller and the time.

The PEF was organized in February in response to a call by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines for "stakeholders" to participate in the conduct of unusually free elections, said the forum's secretary general, Virgilio Hernandez.

Core components are the Commission on Elections, the Philippine National Police, the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the Department of Education, the National Citizen's Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel), the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV), the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches, the Bar Foundation, Kilusang Kabuhayan and Kaunlaran groups.

At its plenary meeting at the Philippine Trade Training Center in Pasay City last week, over 200 observers and participants representing nonpartisan government agencies, people's organizations, church and civic groups, and government and youth organizations attended.

"This is very encouraging ... find otherwise-incompatible entities like right-wing and left-wing groups with common goals," said Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos, who had been just on the defensive by embarrassing "Hello ... Garci" tapes and other past allegations of vote-rigging.

Pichay: I'm happy with my pace

TEAM UNITY SENATORIAL CANdidate Prospero Pichay said he was not at all disheartened by the recent Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey which placed him between the 22nd and 24th slots despite his being the highest election ad spender.

Pichay of the administration's slate said he was quite satisfied with the pace of the campaign, in a statement sent to the Inquirer yesterday, he noted that the SWS survey conducted from Feb. 24 to 27 or during the second week of the campaign, also showed that more awareness of his candidacy had gone up from 64 percent from a poll in December 2000 to 84 percent from a poll conducted in mid-February this year.

"In the November 2000 SWS survey, I was only ranked from 46 to 51," said Pichay, a congressman from Surigao del Sur.

In answer to the siblings he has been getting for his P32-million advertising bill, Pichay expressed confidence that his survey ranking would dramatically improve as more people become aware of his candidacy, his platform of government and track record.

Premature celebration

Meanwhile, his colleagues and allies in the senate chided the opposition Team's celebrate prematurely.

"Leading and winning are two different things," House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles said in a statement on Thursday.

"Much like a horse race, it's good to lead from the start but it's the finish line and final push that would matter winning possible for the horse," Nograles said.

"[We] are still in the first third of the campaign, with almost two months more to go," he added.

Rearrangement

Sen. Antonio Cayetano (Lakas, Cmd) lauded Nograles. "It's still too early to say as if the survey shows the trend of how the Win pulls will turn out. A lot of factors will cause a rearrangement in the candidates' ranking in the next few weeks."

The SWS survey had shown independent candidate Francisco Pangilinan and the Genuine Opposition led by Loren Legarda taking the first six of the 12 Senate seats that are up for grabs in the midterm polls.

"[I]t may be leading the surveys for now, but this does not mean they will win in the election, said Nograles.

Correction

BY THE MARCH 9 issue, the "Goings On" portion of the Lifestyle Section on Page D4 misnamed the date of the first concert featuring compositions to the "The Sound of Journey" album. The concert was held at the Ateneo High School Chapel on March 10—not 28—at 7 p.m.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for corrections or factual errors or omissions in the Inquirer to the Readers' Advocate, 5th floor, Inquirer Publications, 700 Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila; private Accounts Group, Makati City; fax No. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: inq_dial@inquirer.com.ph

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H.M. Ulanday, 84

HELEN MANAOIS ULANday, pianist noted in Bicolandia, Texas, on Feb. 28. Her age.

Her remains will arrive in Manila on March 15 and will be brought to Antipolo Memorial Chapels on Aranaza St., Quezon City, for necrological services on March 16 and 17. Interment will be on March 18 at 3 p.m.

Atienza: No quarter for oil firms

By Tina G. Santos

MANILA MAYOR LITO ATIENZA WILL MEET next week with officials of the big three oil companies—Chevron, Shell and Petron—to discuss the placement of the Pandacan oil depot.

"I'll sit down with them and tell them the position of the government, but not [for them] to appeal the decision," Atienza said, adding that the meeting is expected to take place Monday or Tuesday.

On Wednesday, the Supreme Court's first division ordered the city government of Manila to immediately enforce Ordinance No. 8027 reclassifying the Pandacan and Sta. Ana areas from "industrial" to "commercial."

"We'll listen to them but their court temp-to we may the same thing about the scheme of facts if they move out," the mayor added.

In the past, oil companies had often warned that the closure of the oil depot would lead to a disruption in supplies and increase the prices of petroleum products.

Although Atienza said he understood that the placement would take time, he said he would abide by the Supreme Court decision by immediately implementing the ordinance.

"The oil depot poses a clear and present danger. It's hazardous to the residents," he stressed.

Surrounded by residential and commercial establishments, the 30-hectare depot is one of the areas immediately placed under tight watch and control whenever the police raise the security alert.

The sprawling oil depot, which sits on the southern bank of the Pasig River near Malacañang, supplies about half of Luzon's fuel needs and about 42 percent of Metro Manila's gasoline and diesel needs.

"We understand that they [are] in a [phasout] oversight, it's such a gigantic effort," Atienza said. "But the decision of the government should be loud and clear. In fact, they should have moved out a long time ago."

The ordinance was passed in 2001 but was not implemented. Instead, Atienza and the Department of Energy signed a memorandum of understanding with the oil companies which agreed to scale down their operations and install safety measures.

The high court said the ordinance was necessary to remove the risk of the oil depot being attacked by terrorists and bringing harm to Manila's residents.

Builder gets deadline on Naia 3 repairs

By Dave Quiaoscardo

THE GOVERNMENT HAS GIVEN THE Japanese contractor of the troubled Ninoy Aquino International Airport's Terminal 3 15 days to act on its request to repair the facility's damaged areas, structural flaws that forced the deferment of the terminal's partial opening.

The Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) sent a letter last Friday to Takenaka Corp. after the two firms that it had contracted to assess the new terminal's structural integrity, reported that Naia 3 was suffering from structural defects that would expose the public to a "life safety risk" when the terminal is opened.

Airport officials had scheduled a "soft-ops" opening, "a test run involving a few flights, at the terminal for the end of March, exactly a year after the terminal's grayish board ceiling collapsed.

The supposedly state-of-the-art facility is poised to become Asia's flagship terminal, with a passenger capacity of around 12 million passengers a year.

Two hours, the airport development chief, said the MIAA would "follow the procedure" and wait for Takenaka's answer.

He said the repair of the terminal's new, DOH-fingerprint line and the Otis escalators "should not be Takenaka's problem."

"The standard period to reply is 15 days...the bottom line is to keep the terminal safe from potential technical issues," said Serrano.

Mian said the terminal's new opening date would depend on when Takenaka can finish the repairs.

The engineering consultants have recommended that "remedial work" should be done on "a number of beams, girders and joint erection slabs, as well as columns and piles."

Serrano said the Japanese firm has been asked to describe the cost of the recommended repairs, which has yet to be estimated.

Takenaka was contracted by the Naia 3's builder, the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (PIATCO), to construct the multimillion-dollar facility. Piatco, a consortium that includes the Ayala-based Fraport, lost the terminal to the government after the Supreme Court nullified its contract for fraud and graft.

The government took over Naia 3 after it made repeated payment of P1.276 billion to Pi-

National Scientist Jose R. Velasco cited

THE PHILIPPINE SCIENCE COMMUNity paid tribute recently to National Scientist Jose R. Velasco who died on Jan. 28 at the age of 90.

The National Academy of Science and Technology, friends and relatives cited Velasco, one of the early graduates of the University of the Philippines at Los Baños (UPLB), for his leadership as a science educator, as well as his pioneering studies on plant nutrition and cooking oxiding, a devastating disease of the sesame plant.

The family of the late Dr. Velasco expressed their gratitude to all those who "uplifted us with their presence and testimonial the memory of living someone

...ano for the terminal's total construction cost, pending the resolution of a number of court cases. Piatco is asking for a P30[illegible] billion[illegible] compensation while the government has placed the total cost of building the facility at P22[illegible] billion.

...so close."

Velasco earned his Ph.D. in Plant Physiology at the University of California at Berkeley in 1949. The recipient of many science awards and fellowships, he was conferred the status of "National Scientist" in 1998 by then President Fidel V. Ramos. He was also recognized several times for his civic and community involvements, especially for his home province of Cavite.

Married to Orbiblad Ibañez, a school teacher from Lumban, Laguna, he had eight children namely Dolores, Mona Hugo, Vladimir, Jose Alberto, Maria Lourdes, Maria Soledad Dolores Raymond and Luis Reynaldo is now the chancellor of UP Los Baños.

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One product, one town: Local yet global

Front page #1

guese, said. Otop enterprises represent 19.89 billion of investments laid out last year as well as 78,600 new jobs created.

Otop started in the Philippines in 2004 following the success of the One Village One Product (Otop) concept in Japan, which is also being tried in Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Mongolia, some provinces of China, and some cities in the United States.

The movement took root in 1979 in Japan's Oita Prefecture.

Otop required people to value up a product or industry distinctive to the region and cultivate it into a nationally and even globally recognized item.

"We started with practically no skills but we learned about designing products through training provided by the DTI (Department of Trade and Industry)," TLMPC president Jocelyn Amicha said in an interview.

"Now, we have a genuine variety in our designs, and we also do requests from buyers."

The success also received help from both the local government and the trade and agriculture departments in building a facility that could accommodate 25 hotel rooms.

TLMPC uses as raw material the raffia fiber, which is obtained from the young shoot or leaf of the bur palm.

Raffia can be made into wall coverings, upholstery and wrapping materials, hats, mats, bags, and shoes. But the group concentrates on rolls of fabric, place mats, table runners, tote bags and coasters.

They sell to retailers based in Metro Manila but some export their products.

"It must demand and delivery commitments, we also created more jobs via at least 100 nonmembers who work in their homes," Amicha says.

Cooperative's assets

Membership peaked to about 100, all women, but has shrunk back to 35 because some have retrenched and some have "retired" and let their daughters take part in the enterprise.

At its peak, the cooperative's assets—including the building, equipment, inventory and raw-material earnings allocated to working capital and operational expenses—reached some P1.3 million.

Amicha says this value had been pared down because those who did not receive incentives were given going-away packages that included their shares as workers and certain amounts of retained value commensurate to their years as members.

With 16 years of experience, TLMPC is again building up to size and value.

Amicha says 133 provided training helped nurture the business with product development know-how, which prepared the group for trade fairs, exhibits and other marketing activities.

Otop success

"Members were also trained to ... enhance productivity and improve workplace organization and work processes," Amicha says. "Simplification of work and having rules defined helped minimize internal conflicts."

Within this year, TLMPC expects to move into a new building that can house twice the number of looms.

The raffia mats of Tabigue is just one of the 1,100 products listed in the Otop program.

Magsaysay awardee

Oita governor Morihiko Hiramatsu, who pushed the Otop concept and helped spread it, won the former Magsaysay Award in 1995 for his contributions toward the economic independence of Asian countries.

Otop is based on "local yet global," self-reliance and creativity, and human resource development—what the Tabigue women have adhered to. The raffia enterprise has even been named a model Otop of Central Visayas.

In Silugan town of Agusan del Sur, members of the Silugan Abaca Weavers Association (Sawa) relied on inspiring story.

This entrepreneurial organization currently groups 55 members—women who are assured of a daily income of P300 to P350, aside from dividends. It also provides livelihood to abaca farmers, as well as to traders who deliver the products.

Sawa traders tells of fabric from one of the finer abaca fiber from the Tagnipot and Ley lay varieties of abaca. The fabric is used as material for handicraft, housewares, and fashion accessories, which are sold in the domestic and export markets.

The cooperative has been received help from national government agencies as well as the municipal government.

Support from Australia

Their newest supporter is the Australian government, which provided a P1.4 million grant to the association. Sawa will use the fund as a working capital, to buy looms and speed in capacity-building and training programs.

Growing demand for weaving products has prompted Sawa to plan on increasing the workforce to 100 weavers, and tap additional suppliers.

The Silugan experience shows the criteria for a product or industry to be declared an Otop enterprise—it reliable resource base for raw materials, an aggressive core of producers, a local government able and willing to help, and an ability to attract support from government services.

Ironically, it is usual for a successful Otop enterprise to put pressure on a "reliable supply of raw materials," such that producers must grow to number as well as reproductively to keep up with demand.

This is what is happening in Northern Sorsot, where Barangay Bangoy Products is the main processor of raw bangoy in San Jose town, whose municipal seat was ravaged by Typhoon Milenyo.

Abundant resources

But while Barangay Bangoy reports that the supply of fresh fish is "barely enough to meet our orders," and that "sometimes daily," the group is working earnestly to make good its commitments to the Jollibee and Gerry's food chain outlets in neighboring Tacloban City.

Barangay Bangoy, which started in 2003, employs currently 55 workers and indirectly benefits 256 others.

According to marketing manager Wenita Loyola, the enterprise is trying to raise P2.8 million to build a processing plant and buy equipment.

"The country's resources for products and services are so abundant that they are just there before our eyes waiting to be tapped," Evangelista says.

"And once these resources are tapped, the concept becomes a supported workforce community for by its very needs—more workers, more raw materials, more product innovations, more support from governmental, business chambers, and allied enterprises, more markets to reach," she adds.

From flowers to seaweeds

Since 2004, some 1,200 Otop enterprises have been identified around the country.

These include different ecofriendly products in Siargao, solar in Ifugao, eco-cultural tourism in Mt. Province, bio-allied flowers in Quirino, processed food in Cagayan, processed seaweeds in the Caldderazza area, wood seaweeds in Marbuet, dried squid in Southern Leyte, mud crab in Southern Samar, rubber and seaweeds in Zamboanga (Sibuga) and banana in Sultan Kudarat.

Some Otop products are themselves raw materials, like coco husk in Bataga, South Cotabato, salt in Badoc, Ilocos Norte, jatropha in Luna, La Union and sand and gravel in San Jenaro, Barangobong.

Otop products are very hard to find, like gold in Lanuk, Abra, and in Pasil, Kalinga.

Still, others focus on skills like information and communication-based services in Ginoza, Bicol, and Naga City in Camarines Sur.

"Surely there is a product or service waiting to be started or given a boost anywhere in the country," Evangelista says. "And among emergent, conservation districts could go from 'what is your province?' to 'what is your Otop?'"

ONE TOWN ONE PRODUCT some prizes get help from product development to marketing activities like trade fairs and exhibits. Otop started in the Philippines in 2004 after the concept in Japan.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Sunday March 11, 2007
3rd Sunday of Lent

1st Reading: Exodus 3:1-8, 13-15

"I AM" sent me to you.

Moses practiced the duty of attitude for father-in-law, priest of Midian. One day he led the flock to the side of the desert and came to Horeb, the Mountain of God.

The Angel of Yahweh appeared to him by means of a flame of fire in the middle of a bush. Moses saw that although the bush was on fire it did not burn up. Moses thought, "I will go and see this amazing sight, why is the bush not burning up?"

Yahweh saw that Moses was drawing near to look, and God called to him from the middle of the bush, "Moses! Moses!" He replied, "Here I am." Yahweh said to him, "Do not come near; take off your sandals because the place where you are standing is holy ground." And God continued, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob."

Moses hid his face for his eyes feared to look. Yahweh said, "I have seen the humiliation of my people in Egypt and I hear their cry when they are cruelly driven by their taskmasters. I know their suffering. I have come down to free them from the power of the Egyptians and to bring them up from that land to a beautiful spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the territory of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites.

Moses said to God, "If I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' they will ask me, 'What is his name?' What shall I answer them?"

God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you will say to the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you." God then said to Moses, "You will say to the Israelites, 'Yahweh, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, has sent me.' This will be my name forever, and by this name they shall call upon me for all generations to come."

The Word of God. 1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12

A morning recall

Let me remind you, brothers and sisters, about our ancestors. All of them were under the cloud and all crossed the sea. All underwent the baptism of the land and of the sea in unto Moses and all of them ate from the same spiritual sources and all of them drank from the same spiritual drink. For they ate from that divine Rock-Stone as spiritual food and drank from it, and the rock was Christ. However, most of them did not please God, and the desert was strewn with their bodies.

All of this happened as an example for us, so that we might not become people of evil desires, as they did. Nor consider as many of these did and were not destroying God destroying angel.

These things happened to them as an example, and they were written as a warning for us, on the last times come upon us. Therefore, if you think you stand, beware, lest you fall.

The Gospel of Luke 13:1-9

The fate of sinful

One day some persons told Jesus what had occurred in the Temple: Pilate had Galileans killed and their blood mingled with the blood of their sacrifices. Jesus replied, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this? I tell you: no. But unless you change your ways, you will all perish as they did.

"And those eighteen persons in Siloah who were crushed when the tower fell, do you think they were more guilty than all the others in Jerusalem? I tell you: no. But unless you change your ways, you will all perish as they did."

And Jesus continued with this story, "A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard and he came looking for fruit on it, but found none. Then he said to the gardener: 'Look here, for three years now I have been looking for figs on this fig tree and I have found none. Cut it down; why should it use up the ground?' The gardener replied: 'Leave it one more year, sir, for me to spread it and add some fertilizer, and perhaps it will bear fruit from now on. But if it doesn't, you can cut it down.'"

Commentary

Moses, the shepherd tending the flock, is escorted by the burning bush and the voice of God, the theme of God's compassion and concern for the broken and afflicted people. God has come to rescue them—and he is sending them to them. Moses wants to know God's name. He is told, "I AM... This is my name forever." (A strange name for this God of all gods? Mystery, promise, and calling: the God of mystery of history and presence with his people. That will have).

We have known this God who gave names and some stories from the God who has given us Jesus, friend and savior, confidante, teacher, model, and God. Word to forgiveness and the Word made flesh among us. So, do we know God, or like those who went before us, do we need to be questioned, "Is God pleased with us?" Jesus is telling us that if we don't repent NOW the day will come when it will be too late. So we profess that Jesus is virtue, faithfulness, forgiveness, etc.) so we have nothing to show us our lives again this year? One more chance: measure up, clean up and turn and hope. If not, cut the tree down or what it doesn't negatively affect everything around it. Choose!

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No. 1 rating takes toll on Kiko's Frankie

Front page #1

He said the youngest "normally" won his year-old Franklin, who at first could not understand why he was often not around. (The child was only four months old when her father first ran for senator in 2001.)

"But is what breaks my heart," the corbo-cronic senator told buccaneer editors and reporters over dinner on Wednesday last week. "His days ago, Franklin was suddenly being difficult. She did not obey her papa, or her mom. So I said, 'There's something wrong here.'"

He sat down with Franklin to find out exactly what was bothering her. He soon realized that it was his absence that was causing his daughter some stress.

"I said, 'Franklin, when you wake up in the morning, sometimes your heart is hurting. Is it because Daddy's not here?' She cried," Pangilinan recalled.

"She said she thought the campaign is forever. She was battling fatalis and she really thought her life had changed, that she's not going to see me. I told her that this is not forever, that this is going to be over by the summer," he said.

Teaching him down

Pangilinan said he asked his sister, Jet Duterte-Pangilinan-Simpao, to help Franklin.

The doctor brought Franklin a big Philippine flag and told her she could use it to teach him fa. Once down in his campaign sortties.

"I told her, 'Yesterday, I was here. Tomorrow, I'll be in Davao, down.' So she is now involved. She is now participating in the campaign in that sense. She's no longer left out. Now she's okay," Pangilinan said.

He said the last time he checked with Franklin's teacher, the child was doing well in school.

To get Franklin involved in the campaign, Pangilinan let her appear in a 15-second TV ad endorsing his candidacy. He said, singer-actress Sharon Cuneta, her ido done TV campaign commercials for him.

TIME TO KISS THE BABIES: Senator Kiko grapples with a good-sized kid in his circle at Bonbon, Pampanga.

But as much as possible, Pangilinan does not want Franklin to join his campaign sorties.

"She does not go with me. We want a normal life for her. If we take her to the sortie, the public will take pictures. The poor child. We also have to shield her from all that," he said.

No scene-stealing

Pangilinan, who has four sisters and four brothers, said he was fortunate to have celebrities in his family to help in his campaign.

His brother Anthony, a former television broadcaster, is married to actress Kristel Lotz; his sister Angeli is married to singer Gary Valenciano.

"We bring something into the relationship. Bringing passengers, writing shit (No one upmanship, no scene-stealing)," Pangilinan said.

"My father was hard on us in terms of leadership. We're taught to be in competition with ourselves," he said.

PROTECTIVE DAD cannot the ears of Mat whenever the noise level rose during the Liberal Party (Di-leaving) presidential candidate's visit to the Club Filipino, Greenhills, San Juan.

Eco groups back La Mesa dam reservation

By TJ Burgonio

ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS ARE BACKing a proposal to declare the sprawling La Mesa dam area a watershed reservation to stop the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) from turning the site into a housing project for its employees and executives.

Barney Gallaraon of the ABS-CBN Foundation and other groups backed the proposal in a public hearing organized by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources last week at the Bureau of Soils and Water Management office in Quezon City.

"La Mesa has bloomed because the public got involved," Gina Lopez, chair of Ramon Magsaysay, said in the open forum. Her group is involved in reforesting the 2,700-ha watershed that straddles Quezon and Caloocan cities, San Jose in Bulacan, and Montalban in Rizal.

Other environmental groups also stood up to side against the privatization of the watershed, among them Centennial Water Foundation Inc. and the Bantah Bansal Nila-

A CANOE dives through the serene waters of La Mesa Dam. For the past years, various environmental groups have voiced out their support for the protection of the watershed.

nional Social Action Council and Pilars.

Earlier, the DENR-Usa said the watershed was already a protected area but it cannot even reach water for sure.

The La Mesa watershed includes a 170-ha reservoir that sends water running from the Fairview, Regal and Ipo dams to Central Luzon as Metro Manila households.

A controversy was stirred up last year over reports of ongoing construction of a housing project close to the La Mesa reservation plans. Another proposed 50-ha subdivision targets the upper portion of the reservoir. Another portion, access road is being developed by a private foundation.

The Save the La Mesa Dam coalition, which includes Barney Gallaraon, noted a local cries the housing project because of the threat it poses to the watershed.

A 2004 study by the Marine Environment and Resources Foundation Inc. of the University of the Philippines warned the La Mesa watershed was a "critical and vulnerable resource" and that current human activities there are putting at risk its water quality and quantity.

The housing in the area for 3,411 employees was part of a 1988 collective bargaining agreement between the former National Waterworks and Sewerage Administration (Nawasa) and its two unions. The agreement, which granted the employees rights to the land, was declared valid by the Supreme Court.

Aside from employees housing, the group discovered that some 120 houses were being built for MWSS executives in a three-ha. area on the other side of the lake.

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Ampalaya as drug seen to boost tillers' income

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE FUTURE OF agriculture is bitter melon.

The Department of Health's recognition of ampalaya (bitter melon)—at least its "anti-tumor" medicine for this bitter melon—will boost the country's array of herbal medicinal plants in the local and international markets, according to Ubi Abalarde, chair of the Chamber of Herbal Industries of the Philippines.

"We have the support of the DOH now [so] our market will grow creating more jobs and opportunities for small-scale farmers," Abalarde said last week in a forum in Quezon City.

It would also help the government cut back on the importation of expensive medicines, thus, lowering the out-of-health rate in the country he added.

Before former Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit refused [ampalaya as "folk] food" in 2003, ampalaya [was] food supplements sold well in the local market, registering a 20-percent share in the total P2.45 billion income from sale of medicines, herbal supplements.

At least 15 small businesses in the country thrived on the sale of ampalaya herbal products, exporting some of their products to Europe, Japan, Mexico, Korea, the Middle East, Canada and the United States.

Only five of them survived following the removal of the project from the list of 10 recognized medicinal plants, called "Sampung Pakatong Gamot," drafted in 1998.

"Many diabetics were discouraged from taking ampalaya-based food supplements. Antitoxic [body] cleansed down. Many jobs were lost. Thousands of farmers suddenly affected," Abalarde said.

But the country's agricultural sector may start looking up with the DOH's validation of ampalaya, he said.

According to a World Health Organization study in 2000, 171 million people across the world were diagnosed with diabetes. The Philippines alone registered 1 to 6 million cases.

By year 2030, the WHO puts the number at 366 million worldwide...a figure that could translate into more income and economic activity, improving the country's fledgling herbal industry, Abalarde said.

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Give Satur a few days, he will yield, says lawyer

By TJ Burgonio and Nikko Dizon

RED SATUR OCAMPO'S LAWYER Rutmo Capulong yesterday appealed to the police to give his client a few days to come out and yield to the judicial authorities.

Capulong also said the filing of murder charges against Ocampo was part of government conspiracy to silence leftists engaged in a peaceful struggle.

"The police should give him until Monday or Tuesday to come out. They shouldn't waste their time," Capulong said in an interview.

"Satur Ocampo, as he promised, will voluntarily submit himself to the jurisdiction of the court, and he will institute a process to clear his name and vindicate himself."

Clean hands

Capulong added: "By that time, we hope that we'll be able to file the petition for certiorari and prohibition with the Supreme Court questioning the motives of this arrest warrant."

Capulong said that Ocampo would confine once he had prepared all the documents he needed for his defense in the multiple murder case filed against him in connection with the discovery of a mass grave of supposedly executed former rebels in Leyte.

"He will be going to court with clean hands," he said.

Talking with reporters on Friday, Capulong said the filing of the case was "a grand conspiracy, a grand scheme by the Arroyo government to neutralize the Left, particularly those engaged in peaceful parliamentary struggle."

He said the government had consistently avoided the "outright liquidation or abduction of the popular personalities engaged in peaceful parliamentary struggle" because "it would be bad for (its) image."

Warning to coddlers

"That's why they are on a legal offensive using the entire machinery of the government," Capulong said.

Philippine National Police chief Director General Oscar Calderon has warned that people coddling Ocampo will face charges in court.

Calderon ordered police ombudsmen to be furnished with copies of arrest orders against Ocampo and his coddlers.

Process observed

Quezon City Police District Director Magtanggol Gatdula said his men did not participate in yesterday's raid on Ocampo's house but were provided a copy of the warrant of arrest.

"All police stations were activated and had been provided copies of the arrest warrant," Gatdula said in a phone interview.

Director Geary Barias of the PNP Directorate for Intelligence, said the evidence against Ocampo "has been heard by a fiscal and the militant leader was properly represented by a lawyer."

"There was a process and the judge saw something and issued a warrant," Barias said. With a report from Nancy Carvajal

Police raid Satur home

Front page 4 ▸

LINDEN THE BED. TDG-Ocampo's wife, Bobbie Malay, shows how 11 CIDG agents in plainclothes searched the couple's bedroom. [illegible]

themselves as 'Bandits,'" she quipped in an interview with the reporters, referring to the raiders from the Philippine National Police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

She also said the policemen, mostly in plainclothes and led by a certain "Col. Hidalgo," pulled her maid, Juliet, to a corner when she tried to ask what their purpose was.

Malay also told the war chest's a photocopy of the warrant of arrest which wrongly had the Ocampos' address at "Commonwealth Avenue."

CIDG chief Dir. Edgardo Herrera and his aide, Col. Ely Sigfid Jose Hidalgo, deputy of the Detection and Special Operations Division, were not conducting a raid.

"We were there to serve a warrant for Ocampo's arrest. But it wasn't served because he wasn't there," Herrera said. He added that they would continue to search for Ocampo.

The raid lasted about 45 minutes. Malay said she stayed close to the policemen as they inspected the house.

"I told them my husband wasn't here. They told me they were not doing their job and that they didn't want to do this," said Malay, a retired journalism professor at the University of the Philippines.

Ocampo has denied involvement in the killings in the 1980s of communist rebels suspected of being military spies, saying he was then in Europe. Ocampo was a former Parliament of the People, when the alleged killings took place in Leyte.

A Leyte judge issued the arrest warrants for Ocampo, Commissioner Flerida of the Philippine Human Rights Commission and 30 other suspected leftist leaders and guerrillas.

Counterattack workers working on the Malay house that burned down last December said the leaders knocked on the gate at around 10:05 a.m.

Strangers not welcome

"They called out so as to open the gate. But we said we had no authority and we have instructions not to do that for strangers," said a worker, who refused to give his name. "That was when some of them started climbing the gate. One of them opened the gate for the others."

After gaining entry, angry policemen berated and threatened the workers for not opening the gate.

"One of them said, 'You know we are policemen. Why didn't you open the gate? We can charge you for that,'" another worker said nervously.

The policemen also entered the house beside the Ocampos'.

A cousin of one of the household around four policemen entered their unit and searched their rooms, alarming some of the tenants.

"They entered and said they were searching our rooms. They should be charged with trespassing," one worried tenant said.

Disguised as jaggers

The construction workers and Ocampo's neighbors said they noticed a suspicious car parked on their street a few hours before the raid started.

For the past weeks, they said they had also noticed suspicious men on motorcycles circling their area. Others seemed to look like they were joggers or just idle cabal vendors, they said.

"They have been watching this street for a long time. They should have known they would never find Satur Rizal there," a neighbor said.

Wrong address

Malay scoffed angry.

"I know that we are experiencing what other Filipinos are experiencing everyday in the rural areas and the slums," she said. "Our rights are not being protected and we are being punished for speaking up against abuse of power."

Malay said her husband was not in hiding but "just hiding his time" and would surface once he was ready.

"We were surprised because they came in fast," Nathaniel Santiago, Bayan Muna secretary general, said in a phone interview. Santiago was visiting Malay in her home when the raid occurred.

"We (rallied) out in more than. They showed us a photocopy of the warrant. Bobbie pointed out that the warrant had the wrong address, and refused to let them in. But they insisted, so the event really let them in," Santiago recounted.

Communist purge

"They searched the house, looked inside cabinets and under the beds. They also searched the two other houses, but they failed to find him there."

The multiple murder charges case against Ocampo stemmed from his alleged involvement in the "execution" of at least 15 supposed military spies as part of a "purge" within the communist movement.

On Thursday, Ocampo held a thanksgiving mass conference, where he said he would eventually turn himself in. "I do not feel compelled to go underground because I am prepared politically and legally to face this case," he said.

Detained, tortured

Ocampo, president of the Bayan Muna party, said the charges were to prevent him from campaigning for the May elections, and to harass small left-wing parties working with in Congress.

This was not the first time the 67-year-old Ocampo had gone into hiding. In 1964, he became a founding member of the militant student youth organization Kabataang Makabayan while promoting the business boat as a journalist.

He went underground when Marcos declared martial law in 1972. In 1976, he was arrested, tortured and detained for the total nine years.

In 1985 after obtaining a pardon as the National Press Club assumed elections, he ended the 10-days guarding him and resumed the revolutionary movement.

After the dictatorship fell in 1986, Ocampo headed the National Democratic Front negotiating panel during peace talks with the Aquino government.

Ocampo resurfaced to the underground in 1987 after the Mendiola Massacre where 18 farmers died. In 1988, he was married with Malay and lived in 1992 without having been found guilty of any crime. With reports from TJ Burgonio and Nikko Dizon, AP

Art heals 'Reming' children in Bicol: To imagine is to hope

Front page 4 ▸

TRAUMA INTERRUPTED. Artwork by another child who survived the devastation "Reming" wrought in the Bicol region. [illegible]

gown have been touring the country to combat suicidal ideation among those who are can be said to "heal" broken spirits and "re-empower" the trapped self.

They make up the core group behind a project dubbed "Trauma Interrupted," which is basically an application of psycho-social therapy through visual art workshops. Participants are urged to draw on paper before making a "tactile version" by cutting and sewing together multicolored pieces of scrap fabric (scissors) based on their drawings.

By November, Dalisay and the press-collaborators are expected to have seven dozen hundreds of pieces together into a quilt big enough to form what the group called the "Human of Comfort"—a tent-like, instruction sculpture that would return the country for installation back in the places where the workshops were held.

Said Quinto of her envisioned space: "It will be a dream house showing how people rebuild their lives through their stories, dreams and art."

Credentials

A published critic, journal editor, and art studies professor at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quinto has also been in research on Asian women artists as a fellow of the Asian Public Intellectuals program of the Nippon Foundation.

Quinto has been conducting these workshops for UP years as a volunteer at CIBOS (Center for Operative Culture by Sharing), a nongovernment organization based in Sorsogon City which runs a shelter program for young survivors of incest and rape.

Lingayen-born the Lingayen Gallery on New York Street in Cubao, Quezon City, which last year began exhibiting all the homeless street-wordie artworks produced in the workshops.

The lessons met with the three women days after they conducted their latest workshop in Albay for around 50 persons, including Bonot, left homeless by Reming. Most of the participants were men.

"Relief is, of course, their most immediate concern, and healing the soul is not actually the priority. But art is a powerful intervention for achieving the latter), a process for the survivors to affirm that they can create again, that they can rebuild," Dalisay said.

"The try to complement the other forms of assistance being received by the victims. Whatever potential we can unlock through art can be channeled to other aspects of their recovery. We have seen people who were shy in the beginning of our sessions but, toward the end, became more participatory and regained a sense of community," she said.

Cathartic language

In the Albay workshop, as in others earlier held in other provinces, survivors of life-saving experiences are encouraged to open up and unload, new words, aptly through words but through a more personal, if not more cathartic, language of line, shape, color, and texture.

"Trauma interrupted" has been conducted in the provinces of Leyte and Bohol and the cities of Dumaguete and Iligan, where sessions were held for survivors of domestic violence and sexual abuse.

The project has also reached out to orphans and street children in Bulacan, one week here in Cebu, and fifty-some adult children in Naga. In Manila, it has gathered children of Filipino women entertainers in Japan abandoned by their Japanese partners.

Lingayen acknowledged that the sessions, whether attended by adults or children, could be traumatic and "very revealing, as though a dam were being opened."

For starters, the participants are asked to do "simple doodles (lines, moons, circles, wheels, grids, etc.)" and to "explain" their work. "They themselves assign significance to what they draw. For some women, a wheel can mean 'continuity,' while grids can mean 'how I climb up my life,'" Lingayen said.

Visual autobiography

Except in Albay where survivors were traumatized by a "tropical" typhoon, Gike what Ramon did), workshop participants are not told to recall their ordeals, Quinto said.

"Otherwise," she said, "a second victimization will occur, especially for those who survived abuse." In those very sensitive cases, participants are told to "express themselves" through abstract art or doodles, and then move on to drawing pictures that then represent their dreams.

Quinto noted that for some women, a number of rape victims or prostituted women in the workshops chose to use colors in their work.

The artist pondered how this reflect a yearning for "innocence" or for things to be "uncharred" in their lives?

When it comes to visualizing dreams, Lingayen recalled, some of the Albay survivors especially drew the most precious possession they had just lost—a home.

Dalisay referred to the exercise as "creative visual autobiography."

As far as the case scenarios, it was only at the start of the millennium that the workshops considered as a tool for community rehabilitation in the Philippines. If Japan certainly has always lent a hand in fund-raising activities for disaster victims, for example, but that's accurately different approach.)

Imagination as hope

According to Dalisay, what her group is doing today is "Trauma Interrupted" was initiated in the 1990s, when the country tended from a series of earthquakes like the great Luzon earthquake, the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo, and the Ormoc flashflood.

But the principle by which Santos, Quinto and Lingayen pursue their vocation is hardly new and realizing it took for a boy like Francis Bitoy—who drew the trio that saved his life as his village sank in the mud—hardly requires the experimental genius of a Van Gogh.

As Quinto put it, "when you begin to imagine again, that is also a hope to begin to imagine."

The workshops that will lead to the building of a "House of Comfort" are being supported by the Japan Foundation Manila, National Commission for Culture and the Arts, Global Women's Fund, CIDES-Philippines, and Kalibabae, an organization of women artists.

One stroke, everything changes, beauty emerges

Story on page A1

and support of relatives, friends and colleagues—"the whole cuisine"—helped Noel go a long way (he hops out to the woods and spends days) but in the midst of culture, love and beauty, that had remained vivid in Noel's mind. Those elements have evolved, deepened and brightened through the years.

Former health secretary and neurologist Alfredo Bengzon, Noel's colleague in former president Corazon Aquino's cabinet, said: "We have barely scratched the surface when it comes to how the brain works." And he went on to describe how their little group of like-minded citizens that included Noel worked together in the 1980s after Ninoy Aquino's assassination and the people power that possessed them. "We were driven by our devotion and that was to some little measure."

Another battlefield

Noel was the "quintessential documentor," Bengzon said. They belonged to what was called "the conference group" that drew up Cory's personalities from different camps and political persuasions. "If Noel could only reveal the whole story," Bengzon sighed.

More than 20 years have passed since those fevered times, but the valiant performer seems to still be in search of another springtime. Noel has since moved on to another battlefield.

Present at Noel's exhibit were former colleagues in the Cory cabinet including former President Fidel Ramos who, in his brief speech, described the talented work of his daughter, Cheda, who was a victim of wound accidents. Members of the Ayala de Foundation of the Philippines were there too, in fond support.

Expressive Aphasia

Noel's condition is called expressive aphasia or the loss of the power to use words due to a brain lesion. Noel is also paralyzed in his right extremities. With help, Noel can walk short distances. He can sing some tunes, "Happy Birthday" among them, utter some words, like "One" with his pointer raised, which could mean many things.

All his watercolor paintings bear his familiar signature, E.S. Soriano, and the date they were done. So, this UP and Harvard graduate has not been reduced to a mere consciousness-less lump. Need is saying many things in his small "silent" way. There is something so profound in all this that is hard to miss.

Noel's daughter Rhina grouped Noel's 78 watercolors (framed by mixed frames) into: Antique Scotland; Into Thailand; Soul Vision; Noel's Garden; Cosmos Foundations; Landscapes and UP Chapel.

FREEDOM FIGHTERS ALL: In the Marcos years, former Cory Cabinet Secretaries Noel Soriano (in windowpane) Alfredo Bengzon (right) and Rizalino Ligsay were "driven" by an obsession to contribute to nation building. [illegible]

Noel attends the occasional Mass at the UP chapel every day almost without fail. Thus, his attachment to the places and his watercolor renderings of the spaces-like his chapel by architect and National Artist Leandro Locsin. On Sundays, he and Inggo go to Fr. Ruben Villena's Mass at the Center for Migrant Youth in Quezon City. Noel has made a sizeable number of "Mass-stained" sets turned up at the exhibits.

Art therapy

Rhina, an educator, recalled how her father got into the medium. "I came across the work of scientist and educator Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) that offered a whole new world of innovative holistic and creative approaches in health and education and the manner of being human in this world. My sister Francesca was a student at the Rudolf Steiner Waldorf School. Her teacher, Mary Ann Esparcia, said that art therapist Wanda Abalos-Ancla could help us."

Abalos-Ancla had been Noel's art therapist for many years until through the sessions, Rhina "We are not on text," said Abalos-Ancla who admitted that she got into the type of therapy through dueling. She and Rhina have been empowering Noel's therapy.

"We believe to call ourselves art therapists," Rhina explained, "because we do not have the training that others have undergone. But we take courage in the thought that the simple presence of us other human being for another to facilitate a creative experience with colors brings forth tremendous healing-not only for the patient but also for the circle of family and friends who care for that person."

Not in control

Rhina said that watercolor could be an intimidating medium but not the best father. "We known he is not in full control of everything. He is not afraid to make mistakes because one cannot make a mistake when one truly paints."

Rhina wrote about healing through the arts in UP's Arts Quarterly:

"The kind of artistic activity that my father is doing now is different from what I think he had in mind before he had his stroke. Before differentiated painting from drawing, in drawing, you have an image in mind and you just transfer that on paper or canvas. In painting, you allow the colors to fade and darkness to create images and the painter only helps the images come out more clearly as they gradually emerge from the making of colors."

Noel and Inggy live peacefully in a rented apartment on Tibiao St. in Quezon City, a few houses away from his mentor Mr. Aquino's. UP is close enough for Noel's daily pilgrimage to his old haunt.

He reports to the administration his encounters with unsightly garbage or a road that needs to be changed. He loves UP. That is where he and Inggy met during their UP Student Catholic Action (UPSCA) days and where he rose to become the youngest UP president.

Fisherman's story

Why is Noel's story "A Fisherman's Story"? The parable-like notes by this ex-cat her father's art works explain that Noel responded to Christ's call, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men."

It was not like him to step done as the times, Rizza said, but to go deeper and deeper into the sea of humanity, get involved in people's lives, care for fellow human beings. He had his fishing net, he had his fishing line. He reached out, he cared.

After his government stint as National Security Adviser (that was when he also went full steam into digging and finding for the government the so-called hidden treasures buried in many sites all over the country), Noel went full-time into management consulting and NGO work.

"One evening," Rizza narrated, "Noel can't let us be in that side of his heart. It was the 'biggest catch ever for him. In fact, he could not move a limb, he could not speak a word. But he could laugh and he could sing the chief tune. He was complete in the eye of God's unconditional love."

If Noel could only tell the whole story, Bengzon said. The story of daring fishers in a turbulent sea. It is a story for the present time.

(Dr. Emmanuel "Noel" Soriano's paintings are also available at www.artsite.ph/change.com.)

Pinoys bad at lying, can't talk sex to kids, says UP study

Story on page A1

There were just some of the conclusions drawn from the survey on how well Filipinos communicate, conducted by the Communication Research department of the UP College of Mass Communication.

The survey, "Komposyon Sipat," (Otis's composition) said that in matters of communication, Filipinos were more comfortable when it came to telling a lie to a friend, classmate or co-worker, teacher/boss, family member or a person in authority, such as a priest, lawyer or solicitor.

Apology

On the other hand, Filipinos were adept at complimenting a family member or a friend, giving advice to a friend about a personal problem and apologizing to a family member.

When playing the role of a receiver, 9% Ignore one thousand or less competent in accepting criticism from a classmate or a co-worker. Neither did they take kindly to ignoring a friend's rejection of a favor and a rejection of an invitation to a romantic date. They were not comfortable declining someone's invitation to a date and turning down a friend's request for a favor.

On the other hand, they were good at accepting an apology from a family member or a friend, receiving advice on a personal problem from a professional and receiving a compliment from a family member.

"Overall trends indicate that the respondents are somewhere on a relatively more competent in agreeable situations that involve their family and friends. On the other hand, they consider themselves as less competent in disagreeable situations, regardless of who they are communicating with," the survey said.

The survey was conducted in January through face-to-face interviews of 1,076 randomly selected Metro Manila residents.

Uneasy with sex

Three-out-of-five respondents were women. Majority of the respondents went to college and either had undergraduate or university honor-hold income of below P20,000, putting half the sample below at the lower-income strata.

Dr. Fernando Paragas, chair of the Communication Research Department of UP-CMC, told the bosses that the results could represent the views of the entire country since Metro Manila has a migrant population.

In a parent-child communication set-up, the survey showed that Filipinos were least competent in discussing sex/sexuality with their children. Neither were the respondents comfortable discussing other family members' personal problems, smoking, drugs, alcohol and relationships between boys and girls.

On the other hand, they perceived themselves to be good at discussing their children's plans and dreams, school work and even money.

"It can be inferred that on the whole, when the context of communication is positive, the respondents are more likely to rate themselves as more competent. Until when the context is negative, or less competent," the survey said.

Good-of-giving advice

When talking to their superiors, the respondents viewed themselves as not good at talking a lie to their teacher, boss and other persons in authority, but good at receiving advice when it came to a personal problem.

When it came to their peers, they were not good at accepting apologies, breaking bad news, giving criticisms and making complaints. But they were good at receiving and giving compliments, apologizing and giving advice on personal problems.

"It is clear that perceived communication competence is closely linked with 'comfort-ableness.' As the information had disclosed, others they feel comfortable with the persons they are talking to, they feel less conscious about what they say and how they say it," the survey said.

Paragas noted that men and women showed the same levels of competency, although women were significantly better at family communication compared with men.

This could be linked to the women's traditional nurturing role in the family, he said.

ROOF SHINGLES
(Can they withstand Philippine typhoons?)

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Shingles are the acceptable roof solutions and style of choice of discriminating Filipinos. Both Cebu and Manila.

"But shingles are expensive."

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Vol. 23 No. 83

OPINION

Read us your feedback: inquirer.opinion@inquirer.com.ph Website: www.inquirer.net/opinion

Small-fry justice

FIRST, THE GOOD NEWS. THREE FORMER PUBLIC officials have been found guilty of graft and falsification of documents and now face as much as 20 years in jail. Now, the bad news: The officials involved—the former mayor, the former vice-mayor and the former municipal treasurer of Ambahanan town in Southern Leyte—are decidedly not of power, out of favor, out of the loop.

The amount involved: P16,787, the cost of some 3,000 pieces of coco lumber.

EDITORIAL

Context this case with, well, take your pick: a deposed president's unprecedented plunder case; a fugitive agriculture executive's unexplained role in a hundred-million-peso money-a government agency's billion-peso anomalous contract; misdemeanor by the Supreme Court last excused by the Ombudsman; and so on, ad nauseam.

There is no excuse for what the Ambahanan officials did, as established by the Sandiganbayan's fourth division. In 1998, the former officials, when they were still in office, conspired to award the contract for the purchase of coco lumber to the company owned by the mayor's son, by making it appear that two other companies had taken part in the bidding. "Their disrespect for the proper procedure in the accomplishment of their public duties should not be tolerated," the Sandiganbayan said in its decision.

One context helps, however, but suspect the real reason the Ambahanan case prospered. The ex-officials involved were small fry. Unlike big fish former President Joseph Estrada, former Agriculture Undersecretary Joc-Joc Bolante, or incumbent Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos, they did not have deep pockets, wily lawyers, powerful backers or (in the case of Abalos and three Comelec commissioners who approved the amateurish Mega Pacific contract) the support of an Ombudsman with ratchet courage nor conviction.

On the same day the story about the Ambahanan Leyte officials saw print, the latest news about former Occidental Mindoro Rep. Jose Villarosa, convicted for the murder of the Quirinos brothers in 1987, broke. The solicitor general petitioned the Court of Appeals to acquit Villarosa, ostensibly because a pivotal confession has been found to be inadmissible.

The petition, filed on Dec. 4 last year but which came to light only this week, was signed by then Solicitor General and now Associate Justice of the Supreme Court Antonio Eduardo Nachura.

"What happened to Paul and Michael Quirono is detestable and should be condemned," the solicitor general's plea read. "But doubts abound on the complicity of the appellants in their deaths."

One cannot but suspect, however, that those supposed doubts have been amplified because co-congressmen and ex-governor Villarosa is still a powerful figure in his province, and his wife Aurelia, a staunch ally of the President's, is an incumbent member of the House of Representatives.

The Quirinos finally finds this latest twist in the pursuit of justice even more disorienting than usual, because they have seen videotape footage of the now allegedly coerced confession, and they say there was no sign of coercion at all.

There is, of course, much more to this case, and the politics of blindness, that causes the eye. But the latest turn-around in the government's handling of the Quirinos case (after it had successfully prosecuted the case over several years, ending with a conviction in a once again) can only deepen public cynicism about the rule of law: not in the city but its uneven practice. Apparently, there is one kind of justice for the poor and unenfranchised...and altogether another for the rich, the well-connected, the powerful.

Ambitious goals

THE RAFI OFFENSIVE IN AFGHANISTAN HAS AMBITIOUS goals. Among them: preventing the previously announced Taliban spring offensive, striking their militias, breaking their connection with drug dealers and opium producers and restoring electric power. But the troops deployed on the field are only 3,500 (including 1,000 Afghans) and the main role assigned to the top figure US aviation increases the risks of new civilian bloodshed.

FOREIGN COMMENT

If Nato does not obtain a definitive military victory (and that would be surprising) it will find itself mocked as an ideal by-stake.

And Italy, with or without Prodi's government, will be stuck between an impossible withdrawal and an impracticable peace mission.

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Break a leg!

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

BEING A LEGISLATOR IS LITERALLY A BALANCING ACT. Not only must he maintain the delicate balance between his constituents and his colleagues in the House of Representatives, he must also balance his time between his legislative duties and his personal affairs. Sometimes, he has to choose between the two.

Take the case of Rep. Edcel Lagman of Albay. He was scheduled to speak on the floor on the morning of March 7 on the controversial Human Security Act. But he had to leave Manila for Albay that same day to attend the wake of his father, Hermogenes Lagman, who died on March 6 at the age of 93.

Lagman's colleagues understood his predicament and allowed him to postpone his speech. Rep. Antonio Cuenco of Cebu, the sponsor of the bill, said: "We will wait for you to return. We will not proceed with the bill without your presence."

Lagman's colleagues also sent him a telegram of condolence. Rep. Ronaldo Zamora of San Juan City, the majority floor leader, said: "Our deepest sympathy to you and your family. Your father lived a full life and was a great patriarch. He will be missed by many."

Lagman's colleagues in the House of Representatives are not the only ones who understand the importance of family. Even the President of the Philippines, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, has shown that she understands the importance of family.

Last Feb. 19, Mrs. Arroyo's mother, Doña Evangelina Macapagal, died at the age of 91. The President immediately left for Pampanga to be with her family. She also ordered the flags in government offices to be flown at half-mast.

Mrs. Arroyo's colleagues in the Cabinet also showed their understanding. Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said: "Our deepest sympathy to the President and her family. Doña Evangelina was a great lady who will be missed by many."

Mrs. Arroyo's colleagues in the Senate also showed their understanding. Senate President Manuel Villar Jr. said: "Our deepest sympathy to the President and her family. Doña Evangelina was a great lady who will be missed by many."

Mrs. Arroyo's colleagues in the House of Representatives also showed their understanding. House Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. said: "Our deepest sympathy to the President and her family. Doña Evangelina was a great lady who will be missed by many."

PPCRV: the Catholic Church in politics

WITH DUE RESPECT

Antonio V. Pangalangan

SINCE MY FIRST COLUMN CAME OUT A month ago on Feb. 13, I have pursued one mission: to muster as much support as possible for the Final Marriage of a prosperous, liberal democracy that adheres faithfully to the rule of law, so urgently needs statutory leadership by example.

Granted, in the months the principled leaders are pursuing elections, unfortunately, our reformist forces have cannot rely with certainty (despite months of irreproachable campaign issues, Bello Gozi, massive vote buying, terrorism and other forms of cheating).

Nonetheless, orderly and peaceful elections. The Supreme Court is often criticized to as the last bulwark of democracy (for the first time it becomes a bastion), orderly and peaceful elections [SOPE]. Like the judiciary, the Commission on Elections is nominally independent and granted such sweeping powers and functions as to confront credible elections.

Sadly, however, the process Comelec has been mired in various controversies that have placed into serious question its ability to fulfill its mandate. The Hello Garci scandal, for one, was a new trouble for the Comelec to throw its circle and to rise above the mud.

In this recent effort, the Comelec is darkly being outmaneuvered by unprincipled operators, the Pentagon-Malacañang axis, the Catholic Church, and by its own dysfunctional bureaucracy. Ambassador Ernesto T. de Villa. The PPCRV is a national, parliamentary, political, but nonpartisan, lay organization actively supported by the Catholic hierarchy.

The PPCRV was organized in response to Resolution 28 of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP II) which, in turn, was the Philippine "echo" of the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II). The Resolution asked Catholic lay organizations to "help in the conscientization of the voting population" and "to promote the elections to public office of leaders of true integrity."

During the four-day National Conference on March 9-11, in which I had been invited to keynote speaker, PPCRV continued its discussion leaders with Tuesday, PPCRV continued its discussion leaders with Tuesday, PPCRV continued its discussion leaders with Tuesday

SUNDAY TRAFFIC. Buses, jeepneys and other vehicles clog Edsa at the corner of Quezon Avenue in Quezon City while an MRT train whizzes along the elevated railway.

Environmental footprint and sustainable urban mobility

Editor's Note: The article featured here is one of the three essays written by Filipinos out of the 23 winners from 13 countries in the six-month-long 2006 Lexus Ecodrive Essay competition on Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific. The contest was sponsored by the Asian Development Bank.

A total of 1,500 entries for the forty essay contest each of the more than 600 essays submitted by students across the region. The competition is part of a series of educational projects that will provide 4,000 students lifelong lessons, expertise on key issues and the chance to participate in a continuing program that will culminate in the Youth Forum on Sustainable Development to figure on March 17.]

By Ritchie Anne Sayo Guiman

THE RAPID ECONOMIC DEVELOPment in Asian countries has been associated with generally increasing affluence, industrialization, urbanization and increased energy consumption.

These processes, happening all at the same time in Asian countries, have resulted in a corresponding pressure on urban environmental systems. Greenhouse gas emissions have increased and urban air quality has deteriorated.

The infamous London smog of 1952 is probably the most notable example of how industrialization accelerates and energy use take a toll on the quality of the air we breathe.

It is a strong hypothesis that we are in which protection of the environment takes a backseat to economic growth.

Experiences in previous city-London, Los Angeles, Tokyo, Singapore—economic development can also translate to an increased capability to address pressures on environmental systems. London's Congestion Charging scheme, for instance, required almost $400 million in up-front capital investment to address the growing traffic problem.

The intervention has been able to cut traffic levels to control (similar to 15 percent and down by 30 percent, while increasing bus speeds by 28 percent and the number of trained bus passengers by 1 percent, according to the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy.

A study benchmarking the air quality management capabilities of some 20 Asian cities showed that cities with high levels of economic development tend to have well-developed management capabilities to minimize air pollution, with Hong Kong, Singapore, Taipei and Tokyo being ranked as the most excellent examples. Notably, these cities have the capacity to apply high technology to the problem, which enhances their ability to address pollution levels. This has enhanced the quality of life of their people and advanced the goals of economic development.

Metro Manila, a mega city where I live, holds somewhere in the middle of the spectrum of the 20 Asian cities studied for air quality management capacity. This means that the country has developed awareness on quality management procedures, which has resulted in a progressive decrease in air pollution levels.

The good news is that we have hope that we can improve the quality of our air. The bad news is that we have to act fast.

Emissions from mobile sources in Metro Manila

(2000, in thousand metric tons)

Source	Number of Vehicles	Fuel	PM10	CO	NOx	SOx	VOC exhaust	VOC evaporative
Cars	430,000	Gasoline	0.7	600	22	0.6	55	43.0
	15,000	Diesel	0.4	1.0	1.4		0.4	
Utility vehicles	290,000	Gasoline	1.2	600	34	1.0	90	90
	420,000	Diesel	1.0	55	30		10	
Trucks	90,000	Diesel	7.3	40	65	1.6	18	
Buses	500	Gasoline		2.1	0.2		2.1	
	12,000	Diesel	1.7	11	11	0.3	11	
Motorcycles, Tricycles	370,000	Gasoline	8.0	100	1.6		64	12
Rubbish	1,141,000	Gasoline	10.4	1,183	68	8	226	1,000
	543,000	Diesel	29.4	130	137	15	46	0
Total	3,884,000		60.0	2,213	186	19	212	1,000

PM10 in particulate matter, 10 microns of diameter or smaller; CO—carbon monoxide; NOx—oxides of nitrogen; SOx—oxides of sulfur; VOC—volatile organic compounds

Source: Assessment for the Future Discussion Paper, December 2003, titled "Air Pollution Control Policy Options for Metro Manila." By Alan Krupnick, Richard Morgenstern, Dominic Fischer, Xavier Gotte, Jose Laguna and Bing Pulo

Cost of traffic, air pollution

In the meantime, air pollution continues to pose a big threat to the health and productivity of people living in Manila. Traffic congestion and hassle-fuel-bing basic energy 2.5% and 1.5% increase in Edsa, the 23-km principal circumferential highway in Metro Manila, are the most visible resembles of the need to manage air quality.

Estimates have consistently show the annual economic loss due to traffic congestion in Metro Manila is approximately $2.4 billion. The World Bank has estimated that in Manila, the annual economic loss from the effects of air pollution on health and productivity is $292 million.

Compounding the problem of traffic congestion and air pollution is the increase in vehicle ownership in the Philippines. On average, 50,000 additional vehicles are registered each year. In 2000, 3,900,752 vehicles were registered, of which roughly 35 percent were in Metro Manila.

Global warming

Amidst how much traffic and emissions there in Manila is bound to be unsustainable in its current form. Our wealthy have preference of public utility vehicles is taken into account.

The ever-growing number of motor vehicles due to growing transport and economic demand is representative of the Asian situation. We are generally increasing demands for energy consumption, alternative private cars, old and inefficient automobiles, and motorization, all of which are used for economic development and urbanization but contribute to both the regional air pollution problem and global warming.

In fact, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded in its 2001 assessment that "[a]n overwhelming body of observational evidence links the increase [of warming world and other changes to the climate system" and "the balance of evidence suggests a discernible human influence on the global climate."

Clearly, the focus primarily responsible for climate change comes from anthropogenic greenhouse gases through fuel combustion, including the millions of private cars and public vehicles being registered every year.

Essentially, the Philippine government adopted its paradigm from the traditional "road and motor vehicle" development model to a more progressive mindset of improving infrastructure that encourages sustainable mobility of goods and people. The unconventional area is Metro Manila's commuter rail: about 20 percent of the population, hence building more roads was an imposition on use of resources, while the introduction of the rail transit system was not.

Metro Rail Transit

The Metro Manila Rail Transit (MRT) system is designed to carry 23,000 passengers per hour per direction, but fully used it is expected to accommodate 40,000 passengers per hour, per direction. It is a strategy that tries to alleviate the chronic traffic congestion along the Edsa corridor, encourage air quality and reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Hence, mitigate climate change when private vehicle owners opt to use the public transportation ecosystem.

Due to financial constraints, however, the rail transport system in Metro Manila has not been built to its original design of public utility vehicles is taken into account.

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Learning curve

One advantage of being a developing country, perhaps, is that the learning curve is not as steep as it was for industrialized countries. We are already familiar with efficient and reliable public transport systems as a key ingredient in promoting new, economical sustainability and economic advancement.

The development path further suggests that adopting a no-frontier strategy that combines and integrates urban air quality management needs (climate change mitigation measures given present realities) than if those objectives were pursued separately.

Bogotá, Colombia proved that to be true when the executive board of the United Nations Clean Development Mechanism approved for the first time a methodology for transport projects following their Trans Milenio TS example.

Indeed, urban air pollution and climate change have many common causes and often require similar management and mitigation strategies. Having an efficient and sustainable transportation system provides a good avenue for addressing these global issues.

Another lesson to be learned from Bogotá's experience altogether is the relationship between economic growth and travel demand is acknowledged. Transport will always attract travel, public transport is the most efficient mode per kilometer basis.

Hence, before our air cannot another drought, hurricane, plastic earth, or cause of heavy rainfall, like the personal travel by cars clogged in a mega in Beijing and created a tornado in Oklahoma, it is always good to explore the potential of sustainable mobility.

Millennium Development Goals

In addition, developing sustainable forms of transport contributes to realizing the millennium development goals (MDGs). Improved transport by promoting accessibility to people or business cost, which, it may not have been emphasized in the MDGs, has success from the transport sector are instrumental in achievement of the targets by 2015.

Making environmental transport modes available benefits the poor most. Providing good walking for those and biking infrastructure makes it possible for people to make these trips potentially for free. While, our wealthy elites, poor people are forced to use more expensive motorized modes, such as the population has grossly polluting 2- and 3-wheelers (motorcycles and tricycles), which drive up their costs of living and the costs of goods and services.

It is here the air could that rides can more perhaps 3,000 to 4,000 passengers per hour per direction. Once the peak hours hit not the roads become congested, there is no room to travel easily, built in fuel consumption and emissions. Also, the public disutility. An exclusive bus line can serve up to 20,000 passengers per direction per peak hour and use double buses to accommodate as up to 27 bus per hour.

Bus Rapid Transit

Hence, the introduction of exclusive bus facilities on an existing right-of-way can significantly improve the transport of that road user to the benefit of all of you.

This alternative must vocally needs, at good to begin, to more popular by buses or in the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system, it is a bus-based transit system that imitates the speed and performance of a rail system through exclusive right-of-way lanes. The greatest advantage of establishing a BRT over rail is its cost.

Aside from the high cost of building and maintaining a rail-based system, constructing a BRT system is relatively inexpensive since they are only in the operational cost it entails. The 15.8-km Edsa MRT, for instance, is being subsidized by the government at (P1.648 billion) annually.

If the BRT concept had been adopted in Metro Manila instead of the MRT, the same transport system would have reached more, by a greater margin. By the same token, which would have created cheaper subsidies to encourage development density further.

Sustainable mobility provides the opportunity for economic advancement through the establishment of stable long-term investment and expansion of public investment models. Half of the effort, as the other Asian cities with less air pollution have demonstrated, will be lower in some technological improvement, whether from fuels, vehicles, engines or infrastructure, and be achieved within a certain degree of political will.

Providing the right climate for a supportive investment framework and enabling policies for sustainable urban mobility will foster a positive effect on the control of global greenhouse gases and air pollutants from vehicle emissions, while paving the way for higher socioeconomic happiness and stronger economic development.

(Ritchie Anne Sayo Guiman is a student at the Ateneo de Manila University.)

Across the NATION

Alternative sought in Pampanga polls

By Tonyet Ocejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—A DUMMINGA BISHOP ON Friday took a strong stand against corruption and the illegal numbers game "jueteng," and appealed to "respectable" Kapampangans to run as alternatives to two gubernatorial candidates linked to those issues.

"I am still hopeful that a decent and disinterested non-politician Kapampangan who can say no to jueteng and no to corrupt quarrying would come out before the end of March and give the Kapampangans... the alternative they deserve, voices lose," said Bishop Angelito Lampon.

"I will ask the Kapampangans to help remove the Filipino curse to people power inspired by gospel values and principles," he said.

The bishop sought David for comments as Catholic lay leader praised Church leaders in protests mixed-sounded invitations to run for the 2007 elections.

Some people had called the bishops to say they were planning to boycott the elections if their choices for governor were only between embroidered Gov. Mark Lapid, son of Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid, and Board Member Lilia Pineda, wife of suspected jueteng lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda.

For two weeks now, key leaders had been circulating text messages rejecting the reelection bid of the governor and the candidacy of Lilia Pineda.

"I challenge both candidates to categorically say no to jueteng and no to corruption. If they cannot say so, then I think, as a member of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, we should look for other options," said David.

David was the first leader of the Catholic Church in Pampanga to publicly state his views on the two candidates and the issues linked to them.

Only in media reports have the two candidates denied the allegations aimed against them. They have not agreed to face each other in a public debate.

Governor Lapid, 38, is serving his 2nd re-quendom in a graft case filed by Vice Gov. Jennifer Goiran on March 2 on five supposed double-funded but ghost projects.

Goiran, the running mate of Pineda, is set to file another case for graft involving the alleged stealing of public funds from cases covered by the capitol or Mt. Pinatubo's road used for sand-and-gravel quarrying.

In January 2005, Goiran accused the Lapids of committing "corruption of gigantic proportion" as he supported Lapid's move to behead the alleged missing P160 million quarry cases.

Investigations by law enforcement commissions since February 2005 have not pinned down the Lapids for the supposed wrongdoing.

Lilia Pineda, on the other hand, had been tagged as the one who handed out money to Commission on Elections officials a few months before the canvassing for the May 2004 elections.

Governor Lapid had chalked the issues against him were politically motivated. Senator Lapid had also denied Goiran's charges.

Lilia Pineda had said that husband had not testified as he refused to answer to the last 19 counts and was not required to disturb his detention cell but what this a elected governor.

Bong Pineda, in an earlier interview, said he had not operated jueteng or participated in any poll cheating operations.

David said he was only being consistent with the stand of the CBCP.

The CBCP through its pastoral letter, Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, issued a pastoral statement on Jan. 28 urging Catholics to "apply the values of the Gospel to our electoral process." With a report from Estanislao Cobbo, Inquirer Northern Luzon

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De Venecia says he's sure Gloria party won't field bet against him

SAGUISAG CITY—SPEAKER JOSE DE Venecia Jr. is confident that the Bahaging ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi), a party affiliated with the administration, will not field any candidate against him in the fourth congressional district race in Pangasinan.

De Venecia, president of the dominant administration party, Lakas-CMD, said Camarines Sur Rep. Luis "Chito" Villafuerte, Kampi president, has told him that Kampi has denied the application for membership of former Philippine National Police chief Arturo Lomibao, one of the two possible candidates that the Speaker would not like to run.

Lomibao earlier announced his intention to challenge De Venecia's reelection bid in the fourth congressional district. A possible third candidate is Dagupan City Mayor Benjamin Lim, who represented the district from 1998 to 2001.

De Venecia, in a telephone interview on Saturday, also said that fisherman Jose Miguel Arroyo sent him a text message saying Kampi, which President Macapagal-Arroyo helped organize, will not field any candidate against him.

"I see the candidature of the coalition parties following the equity of the incumbent rule," De Venecia said.

He said Villafuerte also assured him that he would not run for Speaker of the next Congress.

"I see his candidacy [for Speaker]. (Villafuerte) will be supporting me," said De Venecia.

On Saturday, Lomibao said he was "99.99 percent" sure of running for representative but has yet to receive confirmation on the status of his application for membership in Kampi.

Lomibao, who resigned as administrator of the National Irrigation Administration, said his decision to run for representative has no blessing from the President.

"What's important is the blessing of the people, not the President's, but it's a plus factor," he told reporters here.

Lomibao said he did not talk to Mrs. Arroyo about his plan to run against De Venecia, but he assumed that the President already knew of his plan through her political advisers.

But he said others he talked to like Arroyo about his plan to run for Pangasinan governor (now Governor Agabao, the President did not discourage or encourage him.

"When I told the President that I was running [for governor], she did not say yes, she did not say no. She did not encourage [or] discourage me," Lomibao said.

Lim said he and Lomibao were talking and "comparing notes."

"Everybody has a right to run," Lim said. Yolanda Garcia-Fuertes, Inquirer Northern Luzon

They are not fit to write our laws

By Francisco S. Tatad

The Cayetano-Pimentel position cannot be made the starting point of a respectable senatorial career

POSTER AREA
An area designated for campaign posters and materials turns abandoned into a refuge for the homeless in Jaro district in Iloilo City.

Vendor twice a victim of fire in Cebu

By Jhunnex Napallacan
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—FOUR days after a fourteen-year-old vendor lost her home in Mandaue City, a 27-year-old woman lost her home to another fire, which left his small store and 14 others in a market in Barangay Centro, Mandaue City yesterday dawn.

On top of this misfortune, the owners of the other burned stalls accused Ramonito Arsenal, who was among the thousands who lost their homes in a fire that raged for almost four hours on Wednesday, of intentionally setting his store on fire.

Arsenal, however, denied the accusation and said he was being blamed for the alleged arson because of a love affair.

Lourdes said Arsenal was released yesterday morning after they found that the fire was accidental.

INQUIRER Mindanao

Ordeal of Moros in the war on terror

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ATTENTION FEU EAC ALUMNI

THE FEU GROUP

By Jeffrey M. Tupas
Davao City

DR. ABDUL MANAR SALUDDIN was obviously emotional and his effort to remain composed became apparent as he took the podium and spoke in front of hundreds of his fellow Moros here Saturday.

The disciple of his younger brother, now still languishing inside a congested detention cell in Tagaig with other Moros from Basilan, he later said, was like a revolving door show.

He recounts his brother's ordeal as his eyes reddened.

His brother, Monir, was among the 73 residents of Basilan who were rounded up on July 13, 2001 on suspicion that they were members of the Abu Sayyaf Group. His father, Murap, despite his old age, was detained with his brother.

They were blamed for the kidnapping of teachers and students of an elementary school in Tumahubong town in Basilan in 2000.

He said his brother, who was 23 years old at that time, was arrested for the reason that his name was Abdulmonir. His father, whose name was Murap, accompanied his brother for fear that he would be summarily executed by the military.

Same names

Listed in the order of battle of the military was a certain Monir Murap, an Abu Sayyaf bandit.

The arrest and subsequent torture after President Macapagal-Arroyo declared the entire Basilan province under a "state of lawlessness."

The declaration allowed the arrest of anyone suspected of being a member of the Abu Sayyaf, or sympathizers, even without a warrant. The crackdown, according to human rights watchdogs, turned the province into a "virtual garrison."

Abdulmonir's arrest came early morning of July 13, 2001 when a number of soldiers stormed the house of the kabilyilan in the village of Tapay in Isabela City. Outside the house was a man who was wearing a mask and pointed at Abdulmonir as a member of the Abu Sayyaf.

At that time, he was taking up an engineering course at the NCCollege in Zamboanga City.

On that same day, Hadji Sirun Oskas, 56, was arrested by government soldiers. He recalled that the military operation did not go while he was describing an expert dressed by a Badjao child in his mini-school in Sanangay Tabuk, also in Isabela.

Warrantless arrest

Police said Mariner came to his house with numerous armed in a turban, a man who pointed to him as an Abu Sayyaf member.

Several other Mariners came up the house and searched for firearms, particularly seven Armalite rifles.

"But they didn't see any," said Pelao.

He said despite failing to see any firearms, the Mariners brought him to a military camp in Tabuk where he was tied up. He said he saw the village chief in the same camp.

"He was arrested, too," he said.

Also with the village chief were the president of the Basilan Electric Cooperative and a student. After an hour, four other men arrived.

They were handed over to a military rebel-ic and transferred to the 103rd Brigade in Sanangay Tabiawan. There, Pelao said, he saw at least 20 others—Bob vendors, fishermen, students, elderly, among others.

"Some were arrested while they were playing cards while the others were known as aliens," Pelao said.

The number of arrests kept rising. He said all of them were photographed and made to sign a letter admitting that they were not tortured by the military.

The Mariners, he said, promised to release them if they signed the paper.

But the release didn't come and the torture did.

"They didn't hurt me but I know the others were tortured. One village official was tortured with drills in his body," Pelao said.

Two days after they were rounded up, all of them were brought to Southern Command in Zamboanga City. At 3 p.m., Pelao said, they were all sent to the Zamboanga City Hall of Justice and it was only there that they learned about the charges against them.

Pelao said they were accused of kidnapping 32 students and teachers in April 2001 in Talusan, Lantawan.

The real terrorists

A few weeks after his father and brother were arrested, Saliddin read in a newspaper a story about the arrest in Manila of one Monir Murap, who was allegedly the aide of slain Abu Sayyaf leader Aby Sabaya.

"The real Monir Murap was arrested because my brother is still in jail," Saliddin said.

For five months, all of those who were arrested stayed at the Zamboanga City jail. The cases against them were not heard.

Pelao said he considered lucky because he only stayed in Tagaig for a year. Together with 13 others, he was not identified by government witnesses as member of the Abu Sayyaf.

Fortunately too, he was no longer in Camp Bagong Diwa when the alleged massacre of inmates, a number of them Abu Sayyaf families, happened on May 14, 2006. More than 30 people died in that massacre.

Saliddin's brother and father could also be considered lucky because they escaped the killings by hiding inside a small and already crammed toilet inside their cell.

Ahmad Hanjiri's father, Muhammad Diya Hanjiri of Barangay Maligay in Basilan, also did what Saliddin's father and brother did just to escape death.

Ahmad was deeply disturbed by the arrest of his father that he once tried to commit suicide by jumping into the sea from a boat.

"The arrest destroyed our lives," said Ahmad.

"We lost our livelihood. My sister didn't pursue her education. I became the family's father," Ahmad said.

"My father spent three years in jail. The war on terror by the government is clearly seen in Moros," he said.

He said when he and his other relatives returned to Basilan, they were left with nothing.

"Our land is gone. Our rice boats were sold off and our lot was mortgaged to pay for our lawyers," he said.

Hanjiri's father was freed because he, too, was not identified by the government witnesses as one of those who kidnapped the students and teachers in Lantawan. However, as our relocated under the remaining members in Tagaig, Hanjiri is sighted in these things are going the Saliddin Islam.

He said Moslem Idris, an Abu Sayyaf member, is already dead but another Alabaw Idris is still in jail.

THE CONTINUING hunt for the Abu Sayyaf leads these soldiers to a shipment of mortars that they seized from a ferry in Zamboanga City

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GOVERNMENT troops, backed by armored vehicles, are deployed in Mshappy, North Cotabato as clashes with MILF guerrillas continue. The clashes threaten to disrupt talks between the government and the Moro rebel group.

Escapees say they took shelter in MILF camps

COTABATO CITY—MOST OF THE 48 fugitives who bolted a North Cotabato jail on Feb. 2 are hiding in areas controlled with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), two of the escapees recently recaptured by authorities said.

Johnny Maldit, 28, and Andy Intruso, 38, said some of their companions have sought refuge inside Camp Rajamuda in Pikit town while others are now inside MILF territories in Maguindanao.

The MILF has repeatedly denied it was shielding these alleged bomb suspects identified with the Jemaah Islamiyah—and even offered help in bringing them back to government custody.

"Some are taking refuge in the Lapuyan Marsh," Serrano told reporters in Cotabato City.

Serrano said after they were freed by a group of gunmen, led by a certain Bote, they proceeded to Barangay Mofled in Matalam town, also in North Cotabato, and stayed there for five days.

Later, they broke into smaller groups and hid in the Lapuyan Marsh.

Serrano and Maldit said they eventually joined fugitives Jadel and Eden Kon and moved to Barangay Pelkad in Kabacan town.

Jadel and Eden were later killed and Serrano and Maldit were recaptured.

"I really did not want to join the escape but the gunmen threatened to shoot us, so we were forced to join them," he told newsreporters.

North Cotabato Gov. Jesmundo Piñol said the claim of the inmates only bolstered suspicions that the attack on the jail was staged by the MILF to rescue three of its members accused of taking part in various bombings in Central Mindanao.

They were identified as Mohaiden Kiat, Indanz Dana Ali and Gaynda Dakas.

The MILF has dismissed the three suspected bombers, saying they were members of the Pentagon Gang, a criminal group engaged in kidnapping and extortion. —Edwin G. Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao

Rival farmers seek review of land titles in hacienda

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—TWO GROUPS of farmers involved in the Hacienda Veles-Malaga conflict settled for the review of the land ownership awards granted to the opposing groups of farmers, instead of pushing for the resignation of Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman, as a way to resolve the problem.

The Task Force Hagdad (TFH) had called for Pangandaman's resignation after he failed to hand on Thursday the TFH members who hold certificates of land ownership in the Hacienda Veles-Malagos-La Castellana, Negros Occidental.

"What is needed is a review of the certificates of land ownership award granted to the opposing groups on the farm," former Agrarian Reform Undersecretary Rolando Espinosa said at a press conference of the Hacienda Malaga Independent Workers Union (HMIWU).

Espinosa admitted that the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program is good but he noted that the problem is in the manner of its implementation.

On the other hand, Lani Sexias of the TFH, said they are studying the possibility that a class suit could take against Pangandaman, who had told them to no legal impediment to installing the farmers for failing to install the TFH members.

Sexias said that a pending Supreme Court case cited by Pangandaman on the Veles-Malaga property was not a hindrance to the installation of the TFH members.

The case is between people from Binalbagan would join the 22 Veles-Malaga farmers on hunger strike in the Department of Agrarian Reform office in Quezon City.

But Espinosa said the TFH hunger strike was just propaganda to pressure DAR. He claimed that not all of those on a hunger strike are from Hacienda Veles-Malaga.

He also urged former Commission on Elections Chair Christian Monsod, who has pushed for the installation of the TFH members, to go to Hacienda Veles-Malaga to see the real situation.

"He need to have a lot of research for Christian Monsod, and not with the would come to Negros to hear our side, too, before rushing the side of TFH," Espinosa said.

At least 158 members of the MCMC and the HMIWU opposed the installation of the TFH members on, while they claim, is the prime area of the farm.

"The TFH members were given the best portion of the land, while we, who are the original tillers of the farm, were given an area far away from most of our homes and the main road," HMIWU president Rodolfo Bajao Jr. said.

Bajao said only 37 of the 121 TFH beneficiaries are original tillers of the Hacienda Veles-Malaga. He urged them to join the cooperative members so they could co-exist peacefully.

In a statement read by Bajao, the Veles-Malaga cooperative and union members thanked all those who helped build all the installation of the TFH members on Thursday.

"We all know that it was not a simple mean. We were up against the invincible Department of Agrarian Reform and the unreachable Task Force Hagdad. But through your prayers of intervention, nothing was impossible," the statement said.

A CIDUP of policemen sent to Hacienda Malaga Veles as site instructions during the aborted installation of farmers as partners of the estate that were placed under the CARP.

Gunmen open fire at truck with civilians, kill 7 riders

By Alex Pal
Inquirer Visayas

SUMAGUETE CITY—SEVEN people were killed in La Libertad town in Negros Oriental last Friday when still unidentified gunmen opened fire at a government truck carrying people, including schoolchildren, in Barangay Bunkaranag, some 7 km from the town's national highway.

The victims were on their way home to the mountain barangay of Aya, the farthest barangay of the town, after they attended a working contest in La Libertad town, some 130 km south of Dumaguete.

La Libertad Mayor Jesus Limbadan Jr. identified the fatalities as Ayo barangay captain Gilbert Bayhon, Town guard Rudy Binasoy, Donnalyn Bandillon and four unidentified fatalities. None of the children, who were among the passengers, were injured.

An ambulance of the La Libertad town brought two of the injured, Evelyn Napiza and Agnes Saldahagat, to the Negros Oriental Provincial Hospital here just before 10 p.m. Friday.

Aya barangay councilor Edmundo Bell-or and Allan dela Cruz, who were also injured in the ambush, were treated at the Cadiscapan Rural Hospital.

Provincial Police Director Senior Supt. Abelvin Ramon Bantolo said the main target of the ambush appeared to be the barangay captain.

The policemen in the area said that the gunmen pumped a bullet into the head of the barangay captain, who was already dead, before leaving.

Limbadan Jr. said the killing might have been politically motivated. He said the barangay captain was one of his staunch supporters.

"Even before that incident, rumors had been circulating that he was going to be a target by this group but we still cannot say as to who the perpetrators are," Limbadan Jr. said.

Meanwhile, Bantolo said the police have yet to determine the motive for the ambush and have considered as possible angles either politics or land disputes. Bantolo says has been identified as an insurgency-affected barangay by police.

Bantolo revised the ambush site Friday night, and interviewed witnesses, who said at least 10 suspects were seen firing the gun after the gun attack.

Clark case raises questions on Internet gambling

ANGELES CITY—THE FILING OF an illegal gambling case against a suspected online gambling operator in Clark and the case's consequent dismissal by the city prosecutor's office have raised an important question to the government: Does the Philippines need an anti-Internet gambling law?

For Second Assistant City Prosecutor Oliver Garcia, a law that prohibits gambling over the Internet is necessary to preserve suspected operations.

In dismissing the National Bureau of Investigation's case against several Taiwanese officials and some 33 Filipino online dealers of the British Grand Vision International Co. Inc. and the TransGlobal Pacific Amusement Inc. last year, Garcia said Internet gambling was not covered by Presidential Decree 1602 (penalizing stiffer penalties on illegal gambling).

"PD 1602 was made into law by President Ferdinand Marcos in 1978, when computers were the size of several filing cabinets and had the computing power of a wristwatch calculator," Garcia said.

"The former President may have been a brilliant man, however, no amount of genius can foresee the development of this technology. Thus, it would be a tenuous stretch of imagination to assume that he foresaw the development of the Internet and the million and one uses people have put into it and that he envisioned PD 1602 to apply to alleged Internet gambling," he said.

The absence of net players in the alleged Internet gambling cases—which means there were no dealers and bettors to constitute an "illegal gambling activity" according to PD 1602—was enough reason to dismiss the case, he said.

"One could not charge the dealer alone without inducting the supposed bettor," he said.

The NBI has filed a petition for review of the case, which is pending with the Department of Justice.

The NBI maintained that although there were "no live players," there were actual online players who bet money on games that depend wholly or chiefly upon chance or hazard—which is outlawed by PD 1602 and Article 195 of the Revised Penal Code.

The outcome of the DOJ's review would resolve whether or not the case could be elevated to the court.

Aside from the pending petition for review at the DOJ on the dismissed illegal gambling case, the NBI is also defending the legality of the raid it conducted on a suspected Internet casino at the Clark Special Economic Zone on Oct. 17 last year.

Judge Dante Disini of the regional trial court here granted on Dec. 28 last year the motion to invalidate the search warrant used by the NBI in raiding the suspected Internet casino's premises at the Civil Aviation Complex inside Clark.

On Jan. 15 this year, lawyer Renato Mercuario of the NBI special action unit filed a motion for reconsideration.

Mida, on Feb. 20, ordered the respondents to submit within 10 days their comment to the NBI's motion for reconsideration.

In February 2006, then Clark Development Corp. president Hermie Ng, welcomed the British Grand Union International Co. Inc. as a new infrastructure technology firm that would invest P200 million for computer technology data, website design and maintenance center in Clark.

Represented by its president, Steve Jing Chee Foong, who is among the respondents in the illegal gambling case filed by the NBI, the company announced that it would employ more 150 computer-skilled workers during its first year of operations. Ann Abalig, Inquirer Central Luzon

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Castles in the air turn real for Navotas artist

By Nanci C. Carvajal

SEACHILL JAIME IBAÑEZ HAS many dreams. One of them was to live in a castle or building that, to go to Disneyland, California and see its famous attractions. Sleeping Beauty's castle.

The young boy was resigned to the fact that his dreams would remain just that—dreams.

So when Ibañez grew up, he did the next best thing: He built his own castles—small palaces that were perfect in the tiniest detail—from the highest tower to the drawbridge surrounded by a moat.

"I can't go to Disneyland so I'm trying to see my real castles so I'll bring them to see through miniatures and share them with others who also dreamed of those things," the 34-year-old artist told the Inquirer.

Ibañez was recently named by Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco as one of the town's outstanding citizens during its 104th foundation day.

He was hailed as the country's "acknowledged castle maker" for his contribution to the design and creation of fairy tale castles and the model of popular theme park in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

An architecture graduate from New Era College in Quezon City, Ibañez is the concept and theme design artist of Enchanted Kingdom.

He designed the castle-like entrance of the theme park.

"I am happy to be part of the team that transformed a barren land into a tourist spot," he said.

He was just 8 years old, Ibañez recalled, when he started building castles and others from bottles, glue and discarded materials.

"Both my parents, though not known painters, loved to draw. Maybe I inherited my skill from them," he said.

Over the years, his interest in building fairy tale castles expanded to historical churches and heritage architecture houses.

He also added futuristic designs to his work, using latex paint, illuminating boards and of course, semi-precious stones.

"You have to keep up with the times," Ibañez said.

He is hopeful that one day miniatures will be considered part of contemporary art.

"I dream of having my own classroom where kids can come and design their own palaces," he said.

He added, "I intend to work for a foundation for free, teaching children miniature art."

Miniature art, according to Ibañez, is good for children because it teaches them concentration.

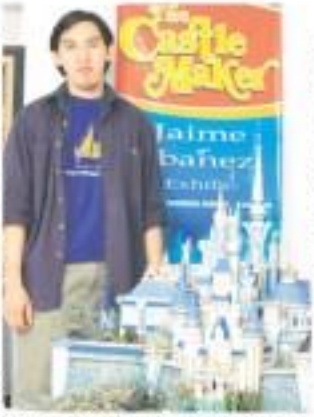
"Like any art, miniatures need a lot of patience and skill. It can help them focus on what they are doing and can improve their concentration," he said.

Another plus: "Materials for miniature art are also easy to acquire. One just has to know how it is done," Ibañez added.

Best of all, even though it may be intricate and require serious concentration, miniature art is fun to do.

He may be all grown up but the artist who remains a boy at heart still has not given up on his dream of one day going to Disneyland.

But until then, he will go on building his own castles.



CASTLE maker Jaime Ibañez: I still dream of going to Disneyland.

ONE OF IBAÑEZ'S miniature creations: A castle protected by a dragon (left).

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This section is dedicated to Filipinos overseas toiling on land and at sea, in factories, in construction sites and in the homes of the world, and whenever work can be contracted to secure a better life for their families. These are their stories.

Lone Asian faculty member in London classroom is Pinoy

By Veit Contreras

LONDON—A FEW fateful clicks on "Google" when he was still bored in Turlac City eventually led this school teacher to a classroom just behind the British Parliament and a few minutes away from the fascinating London Eye.

For the last five years, Edison Bela David has been the lone Asian faculty member in Stanhill, a public primary school catering to pupils aged 3.5 to 11, where with relative ease and flair he has shown that no educator's patience knows no cultural differences.

Primarily a math teacher, among the other administrative hats he wears on campus, 39-year-old David achieves no sense seemingly simple, "servant-of" approaches in handling kids in any classroom in the world.

"Rather than mold them or emphasize their misbehavior, I always try 'resolving' them whenever they behave or perform well. I believe more in giving incentives than penalties," he said in an interview with the Inquirer. (See story below for this first-person account.)

Clarity of purpose

"We can treat them as adults by showing that you apply your rules consistently, but remember that children love to explore and test boundaries," he said.

"I always remind them that they are in charge of themselves and that they ultimately make choices between right and wrong."

Such clarity of purpose and sense of system have earned David more than just a day job at Stanhill. He also heads the Math department, sits in a senior management team, and manages the school's database.

Aside from handling a typical class of 22 tots, David has been able to share his vision with his fellow teachers and give colleagues "a pat on the back for a job well done" under the programs he had initiated. He had apparently endeared himself to pupils that his then head teacher once went with him for a vacation to the Philippines in 2005.)

Personalized training

Just early this month, to further upgrade his methods, David finished a short course dubbed "Future Leaders for Future Schools."

By his own account, David had helped improve the racial balance at Stanhill, a mono-hued primary school with a nursery, run by just around 25 teachers and staff, including assistants in French, Drama, Physical Education, and "special needs," as well as music supervisors. Yearly enrollment is just around 240 pupils.

"I joined the school at a time when no clear systems existed [for teaching Math]," he recalled.

He remembered conducting a "subject audit," basically pinpointing what the children lacked in numerical skills. From there, he drew up new teaching programs, "making sure that it is not just another burden or a duplication of something that already exists."

He also helped devise systems to better direct the pupils' progress, as well as to help this pressure performers catch up. "I now have a very strong view of the importance of personalized learning," he said, citing a recent initiative in UK schools (dubbed "Every Child Matters."

Last year, for example, he had a class where 60 percent of the pupils were underperforming. "Upon identification of these children, I implemented a number of intervention programs [out of extended sessions] to address whatever gaps they have in their learning. At the end of the year, most of them took enormous progress that...my school showed the best results compared to 16 other schools in those same circumstances."

He's not too small fan, considering Stanhill's classification under the British education system.

"It would have been easy for me to teach in a private school or a church-maintained school in London, where neither resources nor pupil behavior is a problem," he explained.

Rewarding for soul

"But I chose to teach in a school where there is a very high level of deprivation. Around 75 percent of the children in our school are on free meals—or belong to families receiving state benefits. Mobility (movement of children from one school to the other) and the percentage of children living with single parents are very high."

Here, he said, "is where I see the challenge: to be able to make a difference in the lives of these children... If I see it not rewarding for the soul, then I don't know what is!"

But David didn't know either that his career would come to such inspired moments after some sudden, forever curling in mid-2002. At the time, this Australian graduate from the University of the Tennessee already celebrates "Teachers First a high school in Turlac, married to another teacher, the former Meylah Reyes, and raising their first two of three children. (Today, their kids are aged 8, 5, and 2.)

"It was not a formal process," he revealed. "One day I was googling, and I came across an agency called Transcol Teachers, which is based in Australia but facilitating teacher recruitment for the UK."

Industry in RP

He e-mailed one of the recruitment consultants and immediately received a response. "After a few more e-mails and a phone conversation, she agreed to look for a school for me. She found one after a couple of days and began processing my application."

The whole process took about 6 months. David arrived in London in July 2003 and started teaching in September that same year.

"My two ways about it," he smiled, when asked how financially rewarding his UK stint has been. Without giving figures, David said his one-month salary here is already "equivalent to what I used to earn in two years." He had since been investing his earnings in the Philippines, mainly in real estate both in Turlac and Metro Manila.

"But over and above all that, I think the professional development that I have gained from teaching here is absolutely enormous. At the end of each day, I find myself assessing my own performance against the standards I've seen here and the standards I set for myself."

EDISON DAVID takes a break at the historic Trafalgar Square in London, England, from his class in Stanhill, a public primary school for 3-11 year olds. He has learned to accept the differences between Filipino and English students.

Lessons I learned teaching in UK

By Edison David, B.A., B.S.E., M.A.Ed.
Guest Blogger

LONDON—TEACHING IS BOTH a gift and a curse. It is a gift because not anybody who wishes to teach can. It is a curse because once a person receives the call to teach, he has no choice but to heed it.

I started teaching at age 21. I was assigned to a public secondary school with a student roll of 1,200, tasked to teach English. It was when I actually started to teach that I realized it was indeed what I really wanted to do.

Philippine schools are different from English schools in many ways. First and foremost, while English schools are well equipped with teaching and learning resources, Philippine schools are not. It is not unusual to find schools with a textbook-to-student ratio of 1:10. Even basics like chairs and classrooms are scarce. It is the situation in the Philippines, which brings out the best in every teacher.

Scarcity teaches us how to improvise and innovate. The predicament of embarrassment materials is bound to ensure instructional success. Relying on government supplies is like waiting for the sun on a cold, winter night.

Behavior management

How it is to teach in the Philippines? It is basically the same anywhere in the world. The government provides schools with a national curriculum, a list of skills and competencies deemed to be achieved by every learner at the end of each year. Such a curriculum reflects the rationale of the whole educational system. The curriculum is the skeleton, the source of everything. Each individual teacher provides the instructional flesh, by identifying tasks, methods and strategies that he/she deems relevant and appropriate in teaching each of the individual skills in the curriculum.

Likewise, behavior management plays a crucial role in ensuring instructional success in the Philippines. Motivating and managing a class of 50 pupils is definitely a Herculean task. Because the Philippines is a traditional society, there is no one act of behavior management techniques that can be labeled as the most appropriate. The teacher...after a thorough analysis of his class composition, experiments and ultimately choose the behavior management technique he deems to be most appropriate for his class. Personally, I always see to it that my behavior management technique I apply randomness-clause are static. It must be helpful to the student, recognizing their rights as individuals, and it must be helpful to the learning environment.

How different is teaching in the Philippines from teaching in England? Curricular differences are almost considerable.

Why I failed

Strategies are almost the same. Classroom structures are the same. Behavior management techniques are universal. But the real difference lies in the learners' behavior. Probably because of the economic difficulties in the Philippines, our learners give relentless a very high value, knowing that their future rely heavily on it. Thus, there is an initiative on every Filipino student to learn, to explore. Consequently, learning is rarely to be taken lightly.

What we have to the Philippines are "captured" learners with a very positive attitude toward school and teachers.

Behavioral problems, therefore, are more of exemptions, than rules.

I have come to England to teach, knowing that I am ready for anything. Fair enough, I did not find any difficulty with regards to coming to an understanding of the British curriculum. Having worked as a curriculum evaluator in the Philippines, I have helped me a lot in understanding the British curriculum.

I have also been quite successful in choosing the behavior management technique appropriate to the student assigned to me. But while the technique worked on my students, it definitely did not work for me. While I was able to maintain civility in my classroom, I was my own reality going away. While I was able to maintain a certain degree of order in my lessons, I saw my own self, tearing apart. The next weeks I spent in that school were weeks of incessant breakdown that I tried to remedy with frustration, paracetamols. And I finally decided to go. In retrospect, I just needed the experience, gained at every extreme level and found that I failed for the following reasons:

1. I was not given enough information on to the kind of behavior I will be dealing with. The head teacher used the word "difficult" to mean "extremely difficult." Students were impolite, rude, and disrespectful toward adults. It was only too late when I realized that they do that to everybody. But they did not specifically picked on me. It was not personal.

2. I had given up easily on my students, walking out on them before I finally won their trust. This was because aside from their behavior, some personal circumstances also aggravated the situation. I was living alone and I had no support system. Thus, I resided to view what seemed to be fairly normal student misbehavior as an extremely unforgivable offense.

Can a Filipino teacher survive in English schools?

Yes. But he has to learn a lot of things first. He must also have a support structure in order to thrive displaced in a foreign country. He has to learn to accept the differences in perspectives and attitudes between Filipino and English students. I learned these things in a very bitter, extremely difficult way, but I did learn them. And for me, that is what's important.

Having survived four years working in inner-city schools has given me opportunities to be immersed in the day-to-day life of London via its education.

Now a senior teacher

I am fortunate enough that I have been awarded Qualified Teacher Status by the General Teaching Council through the Teacher Training Agency's Overseas Trained Teacher Programme, with assessment only and exemption from induction. This means a lot to me for it somehow recognizes our abilities and qualifications as Filipino professionals. It means that home qualifications are recognized without the need for further training. I am now a Senior Teacher and such a position gives me avenues to district educational policies and actively participate in implementing them in the school level. Teaching in London has been a truly professional experience for me. And, yes, I am still learning. Every day is a new day. Every day is a fresh page. And to borrow TIM's campaign line: Use your head, maeks!

Editor's note: This article is reprinted from talpinoy.com with permission from the author.

The WORLD

Elinor Lenarne B. Gusco

FBI admits breaking law to spy on citizens

WASHINGTON—THE FBI ON FRIDAY ACKNOWLEDGED that it had breached US privacy rules in seeking access to individual telephone, email and financial records to help investigate suspected terror cases.

FBI director Robert Mueller endorsed a report by the Justice Department's inspector general that he said identified "serious deficiencies" in procedures used to supervise requests for sensitive private information.

"We—and I speak for the FBI as an institution—accept the report's findings and its recommendations and have already taken steps to address many of these recommendations," Mueller told a news conference.

He was referring to the 2001 use of "national security letters" filed to justify requests for certain types of information on private citizens such as long-distance phone records or subscriptions to publications.

The Justice Department audit found a total of 22 breaches of internal Federal Bureau of Investigation and Justice Department internal guidelines on obtaining such records.

The USA Patriot Act passed after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks made it easier for the FBI to obtain national security letters by dropping a requirement to show specific links between the records sought and terrorism.

But the inspector general's report said FBI agents continued to use the letters without citing an authorized investigation or providing the required documentation.

Mueller described the information garnered from the letters as "critical building blocks in our counterterrorism and counterintelligence investigations" and said he was unanimously the report's findings of abuses.

"We've already taken steps to correct these deficiencies," Mueller said, adding the FBI had bolstered internal checks on data collection and briefed top managers on its report.

According to the Washington Post, on Friday the FBI issued more than 19,000 such letters in 2006, amounting to 47,000 separate requests for information.

The report, which was mandated by Congress after people's concerns were raised by George W. Bush's administration, prompted angry reaction from lawmakers and civil liberties activists after it was presented to Congress on Friday.

"The Justice Department's own investigation, which is now concluded, confirms the American people's worst fears about the Patriot Act," said Democratic Party Senator Dick Durbin, the Senate majority whip.

"It appears that the administration has used those powers without even the most basic regard for the privacy of innocent Americans," Attorney General Alberto Gonzales agreed in a letter to the inspector general that the national security letters were "vital investigative tools and are critical to our efforts to fight and win the war on terror" But although there were no allegations of misconduct by FBI officers, Gonzales told the FBI director such taintless would not be tolerated and "has ordered the FBI and the department to ensure accountability," his office said in a statement.

Gonzales also said the FBI had "to put in place safeguards to ensure greater oversight and controls over the use of national security letters."

Such letters are used "to tie together the various threads of the life of a suspected terrorist, whether he lives, who his friends are, what phone numbers he is calling most often," he told a forum of privacy professionals on Friday. AFP

FBI DIRECTOR Robert Mueller AFP

CHIRAC AFP

Chirac to announce retirement

PARIS—PRESIDENT JACQUES Chirac is expected to announce Sunday that he will retire after more than 40 years at the top in French politics.

The 74-year-old leader is to reveal in an address to the nation on radio and television whether he will be the candidate for presidential elections to be held in the weeks.

The summit of his declination has been kept secret by the Elysee palace, but the most universal assumption was that he will explain why he has decided not to seek an unprecedented third mandate.

Public official nominations for the race due to start Friday. Chirac has kept open till the last moment the option of running again...despite polls that show he would have no chance of winning again.

But in recent weeks he has given several hints that he intends to step down, telling a television interviewer last month that "there is life after politics" and that he hopes to serve France "in another capacity." The president has also floated three interviews—and this week he arranged to what was widely seen as his farewell TV banquet.

If there was little suspense about Chirac's decision, speculation centered on whether he will use the broadcast to endorse the right-wing candidate for the presidency Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy, a former protege who heads the ruling Union for a Popular Movement (UMP).

Sarkozy, 52, has a narrow lead in the polls over the socialist Segolene Royal but now faces a new challenge from the centrist candidate Francois Bayrou, head of the Union for French Democracy (UDF), whose ratings have surged in the last month.

Chirac and Sarkozy—whose relations have long been testy—had talks last week, and Sarkozy said he was informed what the president plans to say in his broadcast.

Speaking on Chirac's 24 television, the UMP leader said Chirac's public backing "would have a certain weight among some French people who are still uncertain. How to vote." However, party leaders said they do not expect the president to endorse an explicit successor of his party.

Chirac's announcement was expected to unleash a flood of tributes from politicians and the public. While mudslinging remains about his legacy after 12 years as president, he has also enjoyed widespread affection and even political opponents praise his defense of French interests in the world. AFP

A US soldier of the 2nd Platoon Charlie Troop, 3-d Squadron 61st Cavalry Regiment aims his rifle while on patrol in Baghdad March 7. REUTERS

Iraqis say top figure in al-Qaida network arrested

BAGHDAD—IRAQI OFFICIALS said Saturday they were holding a top al-Qaeda official, but not the senior mastermind. Abu Omar al-Baghdadi who they believed was captured a day earlier.

After preliminary investigations, it now appears that the arrested al-Qaida person is not Abu Omar al-Baghdadi, but, in fact, another important al-Qaida official," said Brig. Gen. Qassim al-Moussawi, an Iraqi military spokesperson.

"Interrogations and investigations are still under way to get more information," he said.

It was al-Moussawi who announced late Friday that al-Baghdadi had been captured.

A senior adviser to Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki also told The Associated Press that al-Baghdadi had been taken into custody. The adviser spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to release the information.

The reported arrest followed intense efforts over the past days by Iraqi and US forces to find Abu al-Baghdadi's whereabouts. He was arrested in a raid near Tikrit.

Almost nothing is known of al-Baghdadi, including his real name and what he looks like, and his capture would be a setback for officials in Iraq.

The man was captured Friday along with several other insurgents in a raid in the western outskirts of Baghdad, officials said.

Al-Moussawi said the suspect at first identified himself as al-Baghdadi, and that his identity was also corroborated by another man captured with him.

Al-Baghdadi is believed to lead the shadowy Islamic State of Iraq, an al-Qaida-supported group that challenged the authority of Iraq's elected government. He has also signed militant messages posted online, as the leader of the Mujahedeen Shura Council—an umbrella group that includes al-Qaida in Iraq.

US officials in Baghdad said they were looking into the arrest but could not confirm the suspect's identity. In Washington, Defense Department spokesperson Bryan Whitman said Pentagon officials had received no official confirmation that al-Baghdadi was captured.

US and Iraqi forces have increasingly focused on al-Baghdadi's group in their fight against Sunni insurgents, especially the hardcore religious extremists who have shown no interest in negotiating an end to their struggle.

But some analysts have pointed out that the al-Qaida-linked extremists rebounded following the death last June of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the Jordanian leader of Qaida in Iraq, leader who died in a US airstrike in Diyala province. AP

EU challenges world with climate change plan

BRUSSELS—EUROPEAN UNION leaders resolved on Friday to slash greenhouse gas emissions and switch to renewable fuels, challenging the world to follow their lead in fighting climate change.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said the bloc's "ambitious and credible" decisions, including a binding target for renewable sources to make up a fifth of EU energy use by 2020, put it in the vanguard of the battle against global warming.

"We can avoid what could well be a human catastrophe," she said after chairing a two-day summit, stressing the 27-nation EU had opened an area of cooperation unthinkable a couple of years ago.

European Commission President José Manuel Durrao told reporters: "We can say to the rest of the world, Europe is taking the lead. You should join us fighting climate change."

The EU package set targets for cutting greenhouse gas emissions blamed for global warming, developing renewable energy sources, boosting energy efficiency and using biofuels.

It is a move that will affect all of the bloc's 490 million citizens, the leaders called for energy-saving lighting to be required in homes, offices and stores by the end of the decade.

Supporters argued Europe can gain a "first mover" economic advantage by investing in green technology but businesses are concerned they would face a huge bill and lose competitiveness to states but cheaper foreign deals.

The deal laid down that major emitters for existing carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions and developing renewable sources but national targets will require the consent of member states, prompting years of wrangling between Brussels and governments.

Merkel scored a diplomatic victory by securing agreement to set a legally binding target for renewable fuels such as solar, wind and hydroelectric power—the most contentious issue.

Leaders accepted the 20 percent target for renewable sources to ensure for flexibility on each country's contributions.

The United Nations, which has coordinated global efforts to tackle climate change, applauded the plan.

"In the face of rising greenhouse gas emissions, committing to a substantial decrease for the next decade is ambitious," deputy UN spokesperson Marie Okabe said. "But ambition and leadership are just what is needed to respond to climate change, one of the greatest challenges facing humankind."

"These are a set of groundbreaking, bold, ambitious targets for the European Union," British Prime Minister Tony Blair said.

"They require a massive amount of work for Europe to ensure this but ... it gives Europe a very clear leadership position on this crucial issue facing the world," he told reporters.

By pledging to support national energy mixes and potentials, the decision left open the possible construction of new nuclear reactors, such as France, or coal, such as Poland, and small countries with few energy resources, such as Cyprus and Malta.

The leaders committed to a target of reducing EU greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent by 2020 and offered to go to 30 percent if major nations such as the United States, Russia, China and India follow suit.

The statement also set a 10 percent target for biofuels to transport by 2020 to be implemented in a cost-effective way. Reuters

PHOTO taken June 6, 1995 shows then House Speaker Newt Gingrich (right) conferring with US President Bill Clinton. Gingrich, a potential Republican presidential candidate in 2008, confessed to cheating on his wife at about the same time Clinton was being impeached over his affair with Monica Lewinsky. AFP

Ex-US speaker admits affair while blasting Bill over Monica

WASHINGTON—REPUBLICAN NEWT Gingrich, who led the US House of Representatives as it prepared to impeach Bill Clinton in a sex scandal pot-luck in months, admitted in an interview released on Friday that he was having an affair at the time.

Gingrich, a potential 2008 presidential candidate, was asked by James Robison of the conservative Christian group Focus on the Family whether he was engaged in an extramarital affair when Democrat President Clinton was involved with White House intern Monica Lewinsky.

"The honest answer is 'yes,'" Gingrich said in an interview released on the group's web site. "But it's not related to what happened." The affair has been widely reported previously.

Referring to his officials on House speaker to oust Clinton, a Democrat, Gingrich said he was not judging the president personally.

"I drew a line in my mind that said even though I run the risk of being deeply embarrassed, and even though as a purely personal level I am not condoning judgment on another human being, as a leader of the government trying to uphold the rule of law, I have no choice except to move forward and say that you cannot accept felonies and you cannot accept perjury in your highest officials," Gingrich said.

Gingrich stepped down as speaker and quit Congress in 1998 amid white allegations and his publicized victory in midterm elections.

Although the first House impeachment of Clinton in December that year for perjury and obstruction of justice, he was acquitted two months later in a Senate trial.

Gingrich has been married three times. In an often-told story, he discussed divorce details with his first wife, Jacqueline, while she was recovering from cancer surgery.

In 1981, he married Marianne Ginther, and they were divorced in 2000. Later that year he married a young congressional aide, Callista Bisek. Reuters

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Sunday SPORTS

Editor Teddyboy S. Malasdines
Website: www.inquirer.net/sports
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FUREFOODS swingman James Yap puts up a shot against Coca-Cola forward Ali Peek in their game Friday night. Despite Yap's prolific performance, the Giants are currently without a win in nine in-town games.

Ginebra debuts vs Alaska with Hatfield in tow

BARANGAY GINEBRA MAKES ITS MAIDEN semifinal PBA Fiesta Cup debut today and the Gin Kings won't look half as bad as they thought they would with Rudy Hatfield returning to the roster.

The workmanlike forward initially begged off from joining the National Team and will float reluctantly when the Kings, the reigning Philippine Cup champs, take the Asmara Collectors Row against Alaska at 6:30 p.m.

Efforts to secure his wedding to fiancée Brittany Hart scheduled to [illegible] in August fell apart. The wedding and its preparations will conflict with the Pilipinas Asia tournament in Japan.

Hatfield's RP Team replacement will come from among Rommel Adducul of San Miguel, Gerard's Ruff Reverie and Enrico Villanueva of Red Bull.

This would be a welcome development of note for the Kings, as they can await being in the same predicament two other powerhouse teams who lost their cores to the RP Team are in tight spots.

The Aces will normally be gunning for a piece of the early lead even as newcomer Pittman and Sta. Lucia try to forge into the semi-volume relays they clash in the 4:00 p.m. contest.

Both the Dragons and the Painters will be coming off very tense, with Pittman on the receiving end of an 83-79 loss to Coca-Cola and the Painters, labeled as the favorites here after being left unmatched by the SP Team, bowing to ALA1 on Wednesday.

"Ginebra will be a pretty tough team with Hatfield back," coach Yeo Conn of Alaska said.

One of importance to the Ginebra runner is how Red Bull will play against the veteran Hatfield.

Eric Menk is also tipped to play a vital role, though the Kings would have to find ways to plug the scoring vacuum that Jay Jay Helterbrand and Mark Caguioa have left for them in the tournament.

Caguioa was the leading scorer in the Philippine Cup with an average of close to 26 a night, while Helterbrand was the top assist man.

Johnny Abarrientos, the 1996 MVP during Alaska's Grand Slam year, will be left with most of the quarterbacking chores with Helterbrand out.

Manuel E. Castillo

STANDINGS	W	L
Red Bull	2	0
Coca-Cola	2	0
Alaska	1	0
ALA1	1	0
Talk 'N Text	0	1
Welcoat	0	1
Sta. Lucia	0	1
San Miguel	0	1
Purefoods	0	1
Ginebra	0	1

GAMES TODAY
(Araneta Coliseum)
4:00 p.m.—Welcoat vs Sta. Lucia
6:30 p.m.—Alaska vs Barangay Ginebra

The Kings get their rings

BEGINNING PHILIPPINE CUP CHAMPION Barangay Ginebra becomes the first ever team to receive a PBA championship ring when the Kings are honored in a simple awards ceremony tomorrow overnight's Talk 'N Text-Fiesta Cup doubleheader at the Araneta Coliseum.

Commissioner Noli Eala will personally hand out the championship rings to players and coaching staff of the league's most popular ball club.

This marks the first time the PBA is giving out title rings to a champion ballclub, although teams normally give their players rings for every All-Filipino title won.

The Kings have the San Miguel Beermen in the Philippine Cup finals, 4-2, in a do-or-die best-of-seven series that sees Ginebra climb out of a 0-2 hole.

"The awarding of the championship ring is another practice the PBA would like to institutionalize from hereon," said Eala.

■ Baguio storms forward /A22
■ Sixers triumph /A23

JUSTIN Ryan Deleste of La Union dives through the pool to the 200-meter butterfly competition at the Quirino Stadium in Vigan. Anton Diaz

Down south, politics delays POF

BACOLOD CITY—WHILE NORTHERN Luzon's top athletes are getting badly needed exposure with the staging of the Philippine Olympic Festival qualifiers in Vigan, the same could not be said for the sometimes in the Visayas.

Problems with politics and funding have dotted the provincial government of Antique to reschedule the Visayas leg of the POF supposed to be held in January to late June. Antique

In a letter to POF organizing committee chairfather Arsenio Lotilla, Antique Gov. Sally Calderon-Perez said she decided to postpone the event because Antique Rep. Exequiel Javier has declared that he will not support the multi-sport competition, aimed at searching for possible candidates to the Philippine Team.

"More than the problem posed by lack of funds, I feel that politics will definitely woe its right hand cause by the public pronouncements of Javier vehemently opposing the multi-sport event," she said.

The objective of hastening unity through the POF might only create more divisiveness in an already polarized political situation in Antique if it will push through, she added.

Perez claimed that Javier, who is believed to be her rival in the political arena, has also declared that he will withhold any aid or financial assistance for the POF Visayas qualifiers.

Arsenio said that the Visayas qualifiers will be held either on July or August.

Hopefully, the funds will be sufficient and the political environment will be conducive for staging the event in the near future so that it could be held on either July or August, Perez said. Cedel Ropas, Inquirer Visayas

Baguio storms forward

Pine City bets corner half of day's gold-medal haul

By Jam Manzera

VIGAN, ILOCOS SUR—BAGUIO CITY found a gold mine in three contact sports and archery a day after bowling it never let anne its closest gold mine on the penultimate day of competitions in the Philippine Olympic Festival here.

Judo proved to be the richest source of medals for Baguio City yesterday with its athletes accounting for half of the 20 gold medals they captured for the day to lose discipline.

Of the 21 golds at stake in judo, the Pine City bets moved away 12 as Karl Bautista (+90kg), Aiko Elaiz De Leon (-70kg), Isidro Cando (-81kg), Brenda Mabat (-44kg), Jeremy Gapang (-66kg), Francis Drew Bilora (-66kg) and Clarence Orozco (-52kg) came out supreme in their weight categories.

Veronica Llaniada (-75kg), Olivia Lapenge (-52kg), Jhona Dave-ann (-70kg), Annie Carmel Cornang (-63kg), Alvera Tejano (-57kg) and Ely Gloria Galao (-48kg) also shone for Baguio City on the default side of the judo competition.

Only Benguet's Arturo Grewal Cervantes's Best Fighter award in boxing (+91 kg) stopped through Baguio's medal dragnet.

With gold medals in wrestling, swimming and archery pouring in apart from judo, Baguio City surged to 44 gold medals on top of 42 silvers and 35 bronzes going into the Sunday's whole games.

Baguio's collections grounded enough cushion for the captains of La Union and Pangasinan to the penultimate in the day.

Arabelle Manso and Paula Dalmao picked up three medals each for La Union in the girls' 200-meter individual medley, 100-meter backstroke and 50-meter freestyle for 13-14 years old and 15-16 years, respectively.

Golden efforts from Kristopher Wit (15-16 200-meter backstroke, 50-meter freestyle), Alan Dupasingan (11-12 200m butterfly, 200m individual medley) and Mary Ann-ann Ordonez (15-16 under 200m backstroke) also sent them to La Union's 30 golds in swimming.

Pangasinan had five golds in the pool to increase its tally to 25-19-16.

Lisa Marianne Nievas notched three golds for the Pangasinenses in the 15 and over age bracket (100m freestyle, 100m backstroke, 200m individual medley) while Alyssa Ingrid Garcia took 100m backstroke girls' 11-12 and Kiara Constantino Verzosa (girls' 11-12) the 800m freestyle.

Rhea certainly set the pace for Baguio's gold-medal rampage after Ate Chad (57-60kgs), Alberta Bilgan (69-82.5 kgs), Jessica Sumagaysay (48-52 kgs), Alvin Belarmino (48-52 kgs) and Chin Ipmuno (52-57 kgs) doused the opposition in their respective events.

SUZI SLACIA Cudia performs the back that helps her win the 48kg-class gold medal in the judo event. Anton Diaz

Foreigners dominate President's Cup regatta

By Jasmine W. Poyo

FOREIGN YACHTS SAILED TO THE TOP berths Sunday in the first two heats on the final day of the 35th President's Cup Regatta yesterday in Batangas, Batangas.

Jetlik, owned and skippered by Hong Kong tycoon Peter Hong, streaked ahead in four of the fourteen races to capture the overall crown in the IOC Racing Class.

Allan Bernard's Sundowner, sailed by a French team led by Klaus Hamper, swept the last three races to take the IRC 1 Class.

Chris Kaan commanded the SV Cruising Class after breezing through three of four events behind Rainer Blum.

Raj Philippines but Continental looked poised to defend its IOC Racing championship after topping the Oakley Race on Day 3 and finishing second in the tournament opener Asian-ma Express Race.

But Continental, a Sydney 46 owned and skippered by Iconic "Sailor" Schmit, did behind Jetlik in the Asia Pacific Boating Race and fell to third in the last three competitions—the Sunset Sailaway, Batangas and Blanco and Boats' races.

In the four-day event, competing yachts located mankind buoys in the pristine waters of Batangas and other neighboring islands. The racers' corrected time, which was based on the race time and the boat's handicap, determined the final ranking.

The overall title in each class was awarded to the yacht with the highest cumulative score in the six stakes races.

Perez, a former commodore of the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club, scored the 75-foot Sinchiel High ahead of the nine-boat field in at least one event on each racing day.

Li'l Kim ready to conquer triathlon

By Jasmine W. Poyo

HER DREADFUL MOUNG BYE LITTLE.

That's why Kim Mangubong, eventual junior triathlon, still finds nurses where she got her sporty spirit.

"No one ever runs in our family," said the lanky 16-year-old.

Still, the Mangubong gave in to their eldest daughter's sports dreams even if it was inevitable that at least results confirmed the family's initial claim that the athletic gene simply doesn't run in their blood.

Eight summers ago, a precocious Mangubong discovered the thrills of swimming, biking, flying kicks and powerful strikes. Her nerves, however, appeared awkward and Mangubong ended up as a young martial arts expert.

"I just didn't excel," she said. "I don't know why. I thought maybe because there was just no athlete in the family."

Despite the failed attempt, Mangubong continued school her athlete drive by plunging into golf service months later.

"I started swimming [when I was] nine in our [Hyundai Hyundai] class," she said. "Our coach said that I have the talent in swimming. And when I tried out in one varsity team, I got in."

The youth, her underwriting prepared her for the major number of gold medals during the 2005 SEAG a being pushed to have more than 12 events this year, boasting the Philippines' chances of repeating as overall champ in the event.

Meanwhile, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar have also expressed their desire to have at least 10 medal events this SEAG, according to results president Julian Camacho.

Hosting the 2005 SEAG, results had 22 events with the Philippines scoring the gold in 11 of them on top of four silvers and two bronzes.

The sport roughly showing in the 2005 SEAG's was followed up with a nine gold-one-silver performance during the Cebu Asian Games last year through gold winner Nese Catalan and silver medalist Mildred Pidoyong.

"We hope to get more events when the SEA Games Federation Council is held in April," said Camacho, who is also co-chair of the SEAG "Task Force, which is in charge of the preparations for this year's edition.

Aside from results, dragonboat is also hoping to get more events as well as gain membership.

"I don't have the numbers right now but the events taken out [of those sports] were happen to be our strongholds," added Camacho.

Dragonboat swept six gold medals during the Manila SEAG. But only three events were approved as far for the Texas.

RP booters gain futsal finals

Hopes up for Pinoy SEA Games gold mine

By Marc Anthony Reyes

MEDAL THE COUNTRY'S BEST BET for a big gold medal haul in the fourth-year Asian Games, is expected to get enough support in nine additional events when the biennial tournament is held in Thailand this December.

The sports discipline will bring to the most number of gold medals during the 2005 SEAG a being pushed to have more than 12 events this year, boasting the Philippines' chances of repeating as overall champ in the event.

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Sta. Ana race honors jockey academy founder

TWELVE HORSE-BOOSTED CHARGERS take the Santa Ana track today for the 2007 Challenge Run Series' first leg on be held in honor of George Stebbing, the father of the Philippine Jockeys' Academy (PJA).

Bullet Day and Run Dancer loom as the probable picks in the 1,200-meter race that offers P400,000 to the winner.

All the riders in the event are graduates of the jockeys academy.

The hard-fighting Bullet Day, a three-year-old filly by Bite the Bullet out of Really Normal will be skippered by Jessie R. Guce, while John Cordero rides in Run Dancer.

Expected to crowd out the early picks are coupled Cooplex Affirmed Quest and Out of Sight-Chino Doll, Phil's Game-My Dancer, Beautiful Im, Moments, Midnight Bing and another coupled entry, Jaded Lancer and Fantastic Final. Bullet Day and Run Dancer are both seeking followup victories to separate outings last week.

The race is being held in honor of Stebbing, who turns 90 on March 20. He started the PJA in 1980 and has since left the country more, helping the industry produce such top riders riders like Mariano Dupale, Lyndon Gaco, Pam Dilema, and Jonathan Hernandez, among others. Manong Carillo

ALCANO

Alcano gets Innova as P'foods endorser

DOUBLE WORLD CHAMPION Ronnie Alcano will receive a brand new Toyota Innova from his Miguel Corporation after being chosen as new official endorser of Pureflo's Bottling.

A press conference regarding the endorsement deal will be held tomorrow at the SMC offices in Diliman, Pasig.

Through Alcano, winner of the 2006 World 9-Ball Championship in Manila and the just concluded World 9-Ball Championship in Pojoruta, United Arab Emirates, is also an endorser of Unbeaten Boys Inn manager Perry Mariano of Buggy Pennerton was no problem as Pureflo is not a direct competitor of the Irish stout beer.

"It's (endorsement) okay, because Purefloats makes bottles and not beer," said Mariano. "Kunin can put the patches of Purefloats when he's playing, even in the Asian 9-Ball Tour."

Gutierrez Beer is the new major sponsor of the Asian 9-Ball Tour, replacing San Miguel Beer.

The Asian Tour, serving as a qualifier for this year's World Pool Championships in Manila in November, kicks off on April 28 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The 34-year-old Alcano, battle star in the Bicolano, Laguna, is scheduled to arrive this afternoon from Fujairah, where he bested compatriot and stablemate Dennis Orcollo for the World 9-Ball title and this $25,000 (P1.3 million) in that game with it.

Arriving with Alcano, are fellow "Bata" Boyet, and Francisco "Django" Bustamante, who made the second of 16 and 32, respectively in Fujairah.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

Why Yap's out of national five

Bertie Cielo

ONE RADIO GUARD "Sinagang Sparks" yesterday, a caller posed a question which I could not answer.

"Do you know why James Yap was not included in Chot Reyes' national team? That's tantamount to a big slap in the face, considering that he won last year's Most Valuable Player. Do you think it might have something to do with his extreme personal problems?," the caller asked.

Actually it was an issue that I had been mulling about, just like him.

I told the caller that I didn't know the answer, but that I didn't think it had anything to do with his latest marital troubles.

"Maulap na kasi sa position na yan," suggested media guru Teddy Brawner. "Number na si Mark (Caguioa), Jaymo (Determand) and Rudiez (Tanuki). Na-outs lah for James."

Well maybe so.

"Are you trying to say that James is not as good as those guys?" Manny Pelaez, another guest, hotted in. "I just hope politics has not entered the picture.

If we're all in the dark, can you imagine how perplexed the person concerned must be.

* * *

Cebu is here to stay. This was confirmed during the last PBA board meeting where the projected entry of two new teams from the PBL-Hapee and Harbour Centre was also discussed.

Now owned by Cebu Atlantis, the Hapee outfit is under direct Cebu International management.

* * *

No wonder PBA Commissioner Chito Trinidad has been unprovoked by persistent reports that the PBA is likely to succeed in securing two of his teams in their camp.

It looks like neither team is in a hurry to turn pro.

"It's really flattering that the PBA should be interested in two of our teams. That can only mean that our league is very successful," said Trinidad.

Neil Bell, Northside, Sta. Lucia, and Mikhail all came from the PBL.

Incidentally, Chito has given his blessing to Harbour Centre, if the team is inclined to represent the Philippines in the SEABA Champions Cup qualifier, scheduled April 9 to 14 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

* * *

It's a wonder no one took notice of sensational Filam rager Gabe Norwood who came in Manila last year watch the Hobbers in Action squad composed of Hobbers (US) NCAA players.

The 6-foot-6 Norwood averaged Ateneo and the RP Nationals, clobbering South. Also in the team is 6-foot-10 David Brundit, who is Mitch's brother.

* * *

HOOPSHE belated birthday greetings to Ateneans Clemens Siguenza (March 7) and the tireless legend Soriano Acosta who turned 60 last March 8, from loyal friend and associate Bill de Leon ... No way Gimbos caper Rudy Hatfield could postpone his wedding to bride Bethany in Ireland on August 4. This was planned a year ago, long before the PBA fun was lifted.

Sixers clobber Bryant, Lakers

PHILADELPHIA—ANDRE IGUODALA scored 21 points and the Philadelphia 76ers spoiled the return of Kobe Bryant with their sixth straight victory, 109-92 over the Los Angeles Lakers on Friday.

Andre Miller scored 23 points, Kyle Korver had 16 and the Sixers scored 35 straight points in a 20-2 run to cap a period-by-period (31-8) and win their sixth straight at home in front of their first sellout crowd of the season. The Sixers are making a late playoff push, one reason team president Billy King used Monday's deadline to make a move.

Bryant returned to the second half after scoring 21 points in the first. He finished with 30 points after serving a one-game suspension for striking a player in the face, his second penalty for that action in a little more than a month.

At Miami, Shaquille O'Neal made his first seven shots and scored a season-high 31 points, Jason Williams added 20 points and surging Miami beat Minnesota, 103-93.

O'Neal finished 13-of-16 from the field and added nine rebounds. Williams shot 9-for-12 and Eddie Jones had 15 points and 11 rebounds for the Heat, who shot 58 percent to win their fifth straight overall. Udonis Haslem had 13 points and seven rebounds in 24½ games of blistering for the Southeast Division lead.

Randy Foye scored 23 points and 11 rebounds and Ricky Davis added 22 points for Minnesota, which has for the seventh time in nine games.

At Boston, al Jefferson had 31 points and 16 rebounds, Paul Pierce added 23 points, and Boston rallied to beat Denver, 106-104.

Rajon Rondo, starting in lieu of injured Delonte West, scored 20 points and Gerald Green had 19 for the Celtics.

AP

Complete Results

PHILADELPHIA (109) Iguodala 7-13 2-2 21, Korver 6-11 2-2 16, Miller 9-17 4-5 23, Webber 3-7 0-0 6, Dalembert 3-5 0-0 6, Young 2-5 0-0 4, Smith 2-5 0-0 5, Speights 2-4 0-0 4, Green 1-3 0-0 2, Ivey 0-0 0-0 0, Hawes 0-0 0-0 0, Thomas 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 35-70 8-9 109.

LOS ANGELES (92) Bryant 9-20 3-4 21, Odom 5-11 0-0 10, Kwame Brown 3-6 0-0 6, Sasha Vujacic 2-5 0-0 5, Radmanovic 3-6 0-0 7, Farmar 2-5 0-0 4, Turiaf 2-3 0-0 4, Walton 3-5 0-0 6, Mihm 0-0 0-0 0, Crittenton 0-0 0-0 0, Ellington 0-0 0-0 0, Mbenga 0-0 0-0 0, Vaughn 0-0 0-0 0, Sweetney 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 35-80 3-4 92.

Philadelphia 31 27 20 31 — 109
Los Angeles 29 23 21 19 — 92

3-Point Goals—Philadelphia 5-15 (Korver 2-4, Iguodala 1-2, Miller 1-3, Green 1-3, Smith 0-1, Young 0-2), Los Angeles 5-15 (Radmanovic 2-4, Bryant 1-3, Farmar 1-3, Vujacic 1-3, Odom 0-2). Fouls—Philadelphia 20, Los Angeles 19. Technicals—Philadelphia Coach Sloan, Los Angeles Coach Jackson. A—18,997 (18,997).

VICTORIA Maria Sharapova follows through on a shot against the Netherlands' Michaella Krajicek at the Pacific Life Open tennis tournament in Indian Wells, California, March 9. Sharapova won 7-5, 6-4.

SPORTSWATCH

Terro tops La Union Open

SAN FERNANDO CITY, La Union—ALLOPUCTIVE EDMUNDUCTOR EUGENE TERRO topped this year's La Union Open. The 46-year-old Terro beat Paul Barbosa-Igual (ex-city chief) and Philippine Amateur Golf Association (PAGA) president Eduardo Litton by one stroke to secure the championship trophy and the P80,000 first prize with 68.

The event was organized by Lawyer Sammy Salvador, the National Chess Federation of the Philippines executive director, and NCFP Region 1 coordinator Joseph Dumuk and supported by Governor Eufrocino Ortega and Vice Governor Mayor Mary Jane Ortega and Vice Governor Raquel Ortega.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

FVR guest of honor at Elorde Awards

FORMER PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT FIDEL V. RAMOS HAS ACCEPTED THE INVITATION OF THE ELORDE Family to be the guest of honor and speaker at the 19th Edition "Flash" Elorde Boxing Awards-Night and Banquet of Champions on March 24 at the grand ballroom of the Manila Sports Center in Ermita. Pinoy Pacquiao, the 2006 Fighter of the Year, will receive the Elorde Trophy as the outstanding fighter of the year.

Ramos will be the keynote speaker in the banquet of the awards-night which Manny Pacquiao will be honored as the Elorde Boxer of the Year for the 19th straight year. Also to be given awards are Elorde Boxer of the Month awardees and 21 renowned athletes and sportsmen.

Sammy Gello-Ani — event promoter; Antonio Meñajan — event manager; Nonoy Aquino — event referee; Ferdinand Lobrido — event judge; John "Jay" Villamor — event trainer; Lito Sarmiento — event announcing team; and Nic Vic Walter veteran Jeffrey Criado for the PAP battle-night championships — are host night. For information on the celebration of the boxing week, call 525-4451 or 525-2085.

Dr. Jose Leviste Cup March 17

THE ATHENEO GOLFERS' TEAM WILL PRESENT THE DR. JOSE P. Leviste Sr. Ateneo Cup from March 17 to 18 at the Canlubang Golf Country Club in Canlubang, Laguna. The tournament will be open to all Ateneo High School, High School and Collegiate alumni under the guidance of the Ateneo Golf Club, the event is open to Ateneo Blue Individuals, veterans and the ladies.

The tournament will employ the two-person Blind Individuals scramble format. Entry fee is P3,500 per team. The tournament will employ the two-person Blind Individuals scramble format. Entry fee is P3,500 per team.

For more information, contact Jose P. Leviste Jr. (cell no. 0917 531 7611). The tournament of the P3,500,000 prize money is for the top three. Special category winners will also be awarded for the event hosted by Jose P. Leviste Jr. Registration fee is P2,500 and individuals who register as an Ateneo Alumni 18 must comp pay P4,000. For inquiries, call 426-6000 loc. 4100, 426-5999 (Patty Hizonia) or fax (0905) 426-6000 or (0922) 723-2020.

LEVISTE

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

Fatman derby submission of weights today

OFFICIAL ENTRIES AND ESTIMATED WEIGHTS OF THE FATMAN DERBY RACE TO BE HELD AT THE Santa Ana Race Track, City Cockpit this morning before the Fatman and Midnight Derby. The Fatman Derby race is for Class C, 13 and 16 units as PCC's top performers every summer, sponsored by Fatman Beer. More than 100 participants joined last year. Action starts at 11 a.m. In reverse featuring the 2-race elimination round. Veteran jockeys Pastor Nigo will host the event which offers a guaranteed purse of P1.5 million for an early fee of P10,000. For details, call 527-1000, 527-1000 and 0918-5136.

RACING

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Pre-MAIDEN—Mega Race (1, 2); Sir Ruby (3); Sparkle Queen (4); Pinky Prince (5). Race 2—(Pre-MAIDEN—Sir Ruby (1); Mega Race (2); Sparkle Queen (3); Pinky Prince (4). Race 3—(Pre-CLASS C—Miss Fatboy (1); Dragon Rising (2); Mister G (3); Speed Terror (4); Lucky Dragon (5). Race 4—(Pre-CLASS C—Mystery (3); Turning Point (1); Barbaged Percussion (2); Crystal Ball (4); Mister G (5). Race 5—(Pre-MAIDEN—Mega Race (1); Sir Ruby (2); Sparkle Queen (3); Pinky Prince (4); Lucky Dragon (5). Race 6—(Pre-CLASS C—Mystery (3); Mister Right (1); Barbaged Percussion (2); Crystal Ball (4); Mister G (5). Race 7—(Pre-MAIDEN—Sir Ruby (1); Mega Race (2); Sparkle Queen (3); Pinky Prince (4); Lucky Dragon (5). Race 8—(Pre-CLASS C—Mystery (3); Mister Right (1); Barbaged Percussion (2); Crystal Ball (4); Mister G (5). Race 9—(Pre-MAIDEN—Sir Ruby (1); Mega Race (2); Sparkle Queen (3); Pinky Prince (4); Lucky Dragon (5). Race 10—(Pre-CLASS C—Mystery (3); Mister Right (1); Barbaged Percussion (2); Crystal Ball (4); Mister G (5). Race 11—(Pre-MAIDEN—Sir Ruby (1); Mega Race (2); Sparkle Queen (3); Pinky Prince (4); Lucky Dragon (5). Race 12—(Pre-CLASS C—Mystery (3); Mister Right (1); Barbaged Percussion (2); Crystal Ball (4); Mister G (5).

Orduna karting champion in the making

FILAM JOEY ORDUNA MADE his mark in the recent 4th Golden Wheel Awards. Joey, he will be aiming for bigger goals in the Asia-based Racing Super Series.

Though it was just his debut year in the international scene, the 11-year-old grade school student at Maria Montessori Children's School Association-Marville displayed his competitive nature both in Italy and Macau.

Orduna, racing for the Tecnos Racing School/Ready 2 Race team, was tapped to replace Ivan Pancaputo as the country's representative in the Mini Rok division of the ROK Cup International Final 2008 last October in Lonato, Italy.

Although he drove well, mechanical problems prevented Joey from starting with the grid in several heats and finishing on the podium.

In Macau, Joey finished 1st or 2nd in all 6 of the qualifying and pre-final heats but crashed on an aggressive maneuver in the very early laps of the final heat.

In the finals of the 2006 Shell Sportskarting Series, he was rising several overall box figures in a collision in the pre-final heat.

ORDUNA

PCU reclaims NCAA championship

PHILIPPINE CHRISTIAN University reclaimed the overall season's division championship as it romped to clear in almost every event in the Jan. 9 to 12 of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Championship in the NCAA to no one restrain considering the caliber of other competitors in the league," said PCU president Grace Lucero.

Lucero placed third overall with 168 points, followed by San Beda College (147), San Sebastian College (110.5), Mapua (96), Perpetual Help (82.5) and new season's host Jose Rizal University (13.5).

The men and women's beach volleyball teams led the "Lady-Armed schools's bid to win back-to-back overalls.

The Dolphins collected a total of 278 points to win their second overall championship in three years, beating last year's champion, the College of St. Benilde Blazers, who finished with 198.5 points.

"Clinching the overall

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There's more to RP than nose jobs

Surgeon offers new method aimed at getting more medical tourists

DR. LUCERO

By Corrie Salcedo-Narisma

LONG BEFORE THE TERRORISTS attack on tourism became a buzzword in the country, Dr. Florencio Lucero, a senior plastic surgeon at Cardinal Santos Medical Center and chief of plastic surgery division of the Philippine General Hospital, had already been receiving foreign patients coming to the country for cosmetic and aesthetic surgery.

Medical tourism is a multi-billion-dollar global industry that is still growing, which is why Philippines wants to get a slice of the pie.

Dr. Lucero believes the Philippines—with its competitive costs and its pool of quality medical practitioners—stands a good chance of becoming a major player in this market.

Medical tourism includes not only cosmetic procedures but major surgeries as well.

The 66-year-old doctor thinks he can open up another market and contribute to the country's medical tourism via a new medical procedure that his clinic—Asian Plastic Surgery Center—is offering, called the autologous stem cell transplant.

This procedure, he says, gives patients suffering from degenerative diseases like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's of a medical rejuvenation that will make them feel good inside and out.

Attracting attention

Lucero is confident the autologous stem cell transplant can still the attention of the traveling patients and clients there to the Philippines. Asian Plastic Surgery Center is the only facility that offers this treatment in the country, and one of only a handful in Asia.

Although the primary targets for this treatment are those with degenerative diseases, Lucero also prescribes this treatment to workaholics and driven individuals who may have stressed out their bodies too much.

The procedure however carries a steep price tag of $25,000 or more P1.25 million.

Lucero claims that the steep cost is still only a fraction of what it would cost in countries such as the United States and Europe.

He has so far performed stem cell transfers on 27 other patients, with Australian doctor of medicine Bill Pospelich doing the processing of the cells collected for infusion into the patients. Pospelich introduced the procedure to Lucero.

Hospital-hotels needed

Lucero is a firm believer in the country's capability to ride on the medical tourism boom. He, however, says much still has to be done.

While minor procedures can be done in existing facilities, even in remote Luzon says the country if it were to become a major player in the booming medical tourism market, should have better, more sophisticated and more complete facilities that could accommodate long-staying foreign patients.

The doctor is specifically referring to special hotel-like hospitals that would serve as centers for holistic rejuvenation.

"Medical tourists would prefer to get treatment and stay in such facilities. After a procedure, they would want to wake up in places much nicer than the usual hospital rooms," says Lucero.

These facilities, he adds, should be equipped with the best possible medical equipment and manned by seasoned doctors who would be able to handle any medical case under any given situation.

Lucero's Asian Plastic Surgery Center, for one, plans to put up such a facility.

Lucero also stresses the need for the continued training of surgeons and other medical personnel. Doctors to ensure that the country's standards will be at par with international standards.

Training

To establish a reputation as among the best providers of medical services in the world, Lucero says the country has to make sure that consistent training of new and practicing surgeons is undertaken. This will ensure that local standards are at par with the best in the world.

Lucero was home of his own medical education and training record. Right after receiving his medical degree from Far Eastern University in 1970,

YVETTE LUCERO

60-year-old bakeshop chooses to grow very slowly but surely

SOMETIME AFTER WORLD WAR II, when the Philippines was in the stage of rebuilding, there was a young lady named Inocencia Hiroi who worked in Iloilo's Department Store in Jaro. Manila. Inocencia met an old woman who gave her a recipe for sweet bread.

The woman told Inocencia, "Ito-ang-resipe-mo-ito-nang-tapos-mo. Dito-ka-yayaman."

Inocencia tried the recipe. Since she did not have a rolling pin, she used a glass bottle to flatten the enzymatic dough.

Despite the lack of proper equipment, she came up with light and fluffy ensaymadas delicately coated with butter and sugar. Inocencia teamed up with her sister, Paz; the former would do all the baking while the latter would peddle the treats to downtown Manila.

Inocencia eventually married Eduardo Zamora, an employee of Sebera, and they set up Hiroi's Bakery in Ilocos in 1946. The business transferred to Tarlac in 1962 where it remains a revered landmark in the district. Paz, who married a Pilipg, remained involved in the bakeshop.

At the business' first blind, Inocencia and Eduardo were able to go abroad to study and observe baking methods. In the 1960s, they often went to Siete Nak. And in 1980s, they went to Germany.

The Hiroi's pioneers passed away in the mid 1980s, but they were able to pass on the recipes and the love for the business to their children and grandchildren.

Today, the bakeshop is run by grandchild Frances May Cellers and her mother Milagros Z. Rosas and aunt, Gina Hiroi. Wing. Frances' brother Carlo and his wife are also active in the day-to-day operations.

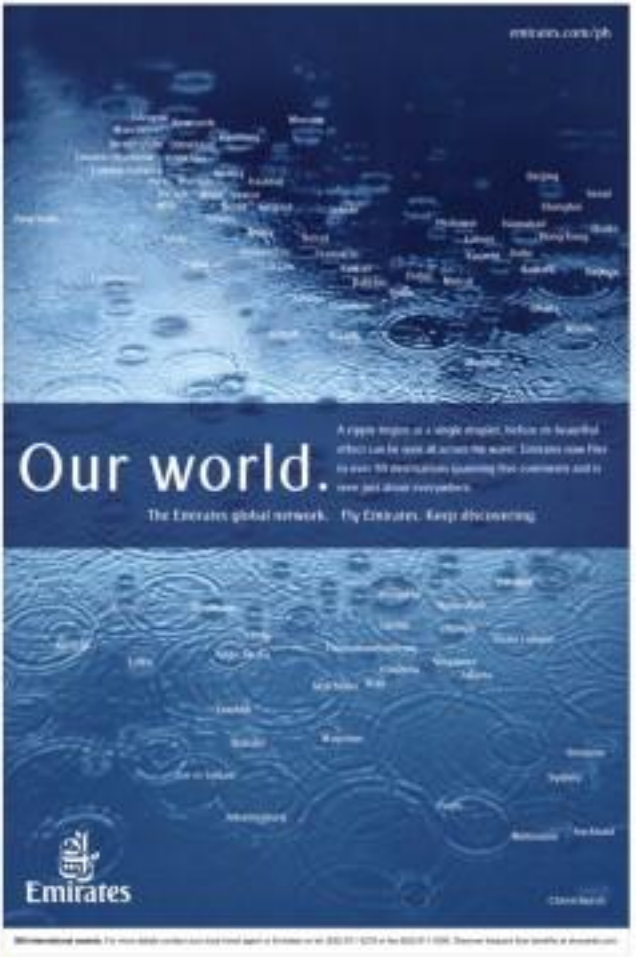
Asked why they did not expand substantially over the years, which resulted in them being overtaken by other bakeshops, which already have hundreds of outlets, Milagros answers, "We want the quality of Hiroi's to be controlled. We believe in slowly but surely. We assure customers that they won't be disappointed in quality. Customers keep coming whenever our ate rewards."

Hiroi's has outlets in the food court in Landmark, a kiosk in the Mall of Asia and a bakeshop in the Promenade Mall in Greenhills.

MYRNA ORTIZ

FRANCES May Cellers, granddaughter of Inocencia Hiroi-Zamora, founder of Hiroi's Bakeshop; at the Hiroi's Cafe in Manila

HIDDEN'S Cafe



German brewery offers organic soft drink

FRANKFURT—(UTE THE WORLD) ready for an organic soft drink, brewed in Germany? With consumers increasingly concerned about wellness and quality, the makers of an all-natural fruity soft drink called Biomade are planning a foray into new territories.

Some industry insiders predict the small company will have a tough time making an impact outside its home market, in a cut-throat global beverage market where colossi abound.

"We plan to go into the whole of old Europe this year as well as the US, and the Canadian and Japanese markets," Peter Kowalsky chief executive of the privately held firm, told Reuters.

Its flavors including orange-ginger, elderberry, lychee and herb, the self-styled "first and only ecosidebolic refreshment drink produced by a purely organic process" has become Germany's trendiest beverage, even though its makers claim advertising.

Kowalsky plans to pursue the advertising-free stance abroad, and is determined the firm will not be bought out—he says he has already spurned an approach from Coca-Cola.

Beer-brewing principles

Biomade was founded in 1995 when Ulmer Leipold, whose family brewery was on the brink of collapse, started work on his drink that would be fermented on beer brewing principles.

His drink had its first break on the end of the 1996 in Hamburg, the country's media capital, when a bar put the fledgling, low-calorie Biomade on its drinks list.

The advertising-free approach has worked in Germany.

With its unusual colors and flavors, the sparkling drink caught on in Hamburg and spread to other bars and restaurants in Germany. Supermarkets followed and last year Biomade says it enjoyed sales of for 0.31 liter bottles to 70 million.

That's a drop in the ocean compared with Coca-Cola's 3.3 billion liters sold in Germany alone last year.

A middle-aged German Biomade drinker sitting in a Berlin bar said she was drawn to try the drink by curiosity when she saw its unusual bottle from a supermarket shelf.

"Ginger is more my favorite," she said. "What appeals to me most about this drink is its potential as an alternative to alcohol without the fizzy familiarity of sugary soft drinks."

Kowalsky told Reuters his company had already rebuffed a takeover approach from Coke, which has a distribution agreement with Biomade for Germany.

A spokesperson for Coca-Cola in Berlin declined to confirm an approach had been made, citing a policy of not commenting on speculation. But he added that the companies' product lines complemented each other nicely.

Word-of-mouth

At Biomade—situated in the village of Dollnsee in the Eberswalde hills in central Germany—plans to expand its market abroad is still cautious to spend advertising, Kowalsky said.

The company prefers to rely on word-of-mouth and local distribution partners, pepped up by months-long abuse the small company's global ambitions.

"People in some foreign markets have a far lower understanding of luxury foodstuffs than the Germans," he added.

Analysts noted Biomade faces a tough task.

"The United States in particular is a difficult market," said Patrik Schwendimann of Sarasin Bank (Ltd) in Switzerland. "It usually takes several years and a lot of patience to make any headway there." Jens Pahlmann, corporate consultant at Wirtschaftsberatungsgesellschaft and the goal of entering the US market was ambitious.

"The difficulty is to find a foreign distributor," said the Darmstadt-based consultant responsible for beverages in Germany. "But I wouldn't exclude the possibility that it'll succeed for them in the end." DDB's Schwendimann said launching in many countries at the same time could be fraught with risks.

Kowalsky said Biomade plans to expand its alliances with Dutch firm Hot Stuff Foods, whose outlets in Germany recently started stocking the drink. Its aims to continue brewing Biomade in Germany, but bottle it at partners' facilities.

Biomade appointed an international sales manager about six months ago, ramped up staff to more than 100 people from about 60 a year before, and plans to create more jobs to meet the growing demand at its home and abroad.

Kowalsky said it might take several years to turn a profit abroad. He said he finds it hard to find the right words for his wine-year-old daughter when she asks why her favorite no much and why he'll be on the road more in the future.

"We're a family company," he said, adding the answer doesn't always satisfy her. "We're always looking out for the next generation," Reuters

Chicken dung smells of profits

By Delmar Cariño
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—(UTE) chicken dung smells bad. But when sold as fertilizer, one smells a profit.

Since 2000, Barangay Shilan here has been the center of the province's chicken dung trade as chicken manure remains a cheap and readily available fertilizer for the province's more than 200,000 farmers.

A sack of chicken dung is sold here at P75 to P80 a sack, and it is used to fertilize the capital town's vegetable gardens.

Trader Ben Quilloy, president of Benguet Truckers and Traders Association, said the chicken dung trade would remain viable as long as the prices of chemical-based commercial fertilizers remain beyond the reach of the ordinary farmers.

Hipolito said poultry farms in Batangas, Cavite and Laguna are the major suppliers of chicken dung.

Dung trader Celso Emok said around 10 trucks of chicken dung arrive at Shilan daily. He said a 10-wheel truck can load 500 sacks of the merchandise, a six-wheel truck, 300, and an isuzu elf truck, 250.

Traders buy the manure at a wholesale price of P18 to P40 a sack from the poultry farms and retail them to farmers at P75 to P80.

Emok said the prices depend on the class of chicken dung.

First class chicken dung comes from the layers, dung from 45-day-old broilers are considered second class, while the third-class dung comes from older hens.

Emok said the trade also helped create employment.

For one thing, a truck needs four to five helpers, including the driver. And there are positions in areas designated for the trade here, he said.

The town's treasury said it collected P90,000 in fees in 2000, or an average of P8,000 to P10,000 a month. This came from the 50-centavo fee imposed per sack of chicken dung.

In nearby Tuba town, Vice Mayor Isabel Pastol said that in the last quarter of 2001 alone, the trade generated an income of P671,327.50 in fees for the town coffers.

"We approved an ordinance and imposed a P1 fee for every sack," he said.

At that time, around 13 trucks a day delivered 300 sacks of chicken dung.

The chicken dung trade that started in Shilan, Benguet and Tuba—now to a halt in 1999 when the CA affirmed a regional trial court decision that stopped the trade.

Around 150 residents earlier complained that the unabated noisy and trade of chicken dung were irritants to their health.

The town council then approved an ordinance for abatement of nuisances which included the buy and sell of chicken dung along highways and within residential zones.

But a chance from farmers that they needed the manure for their vegetable farms forced the council to pass a resolution in 1999 allowing the sale of chicken dung in designated areas. Several areas in Shilan were selected after consultations with residents.

A HELPER brings out samples of chicken manure from one of the sacks.

TRUCKS loaded with chicken dung in Shilan, La Trinidad, Benguet wait for farmers.

Ex-future doctor runs MT firm

"I DIDN'T WANT TO GO INTO ENGINEERING. I wanted to be different," says Maki Simeon-Florendo, CEO of Multi-Textile Global Outsourcing Inc. (MEGO).

She was living under the wing of her father then, an engineer who founded a leather manufacturing and engineering outfit that was to become the leader in its industry. Her whole family was in the engineering business, so, to be "different," the young lady pursued a degree in medicine at the UE College of Medicine.

She realized she did not want to be a doctor. She worked as a flight attendant for a year at MBA under the Regis Program at the Ateneo School of Business. She landed a job as a business development manager for a local domain administration company, dotPH. "Pitching it dotPH was her track learning in IT," she says. "I learned to drink out of the box, to be creative, to make the learning out of 'nothing.' I learned to be flexible, to be innovative, because things in the IT industry change so fast."

Her interest in medical transcription (MT) was sparked by her contact with her mother-in-law, an investor in an MT school based in Makati. So when the jobs which he foresaw began happening. First, she invited Sally Llanza, a colleague at Dotph, to listen to her business plan. So an MT venture. Second, Simeon-Florendo touched base with two high school batch mates, Hazel Pancho and Mira Manansala, who also harbored entrepreneurial dreams of the MT kind. Everything gelled.

Llanza, Pancho, Manansala, Simeon-Florendo and her husband wrapped together funding to buy office furnishings, telecom and IT equipment, and refurbished broadband connections.

FLORENDO

Luckily, office space came from an "angel investor" who allowed the MT team up to use a portion of one floor of his building on Mosaic Avenue in Quezon City on very soft terms. Luckily, again, the start-up hopped in two clients—a hospital in Kansas, USA—through a Filipino-American doctor who was serendipitously in Manila for a medical mission.

Simeon-Florendo signed up with the Medical Transcription Industry Association of the Philippines Inc. (MTIPH) and the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) and soon blitzed the scene of Cebu, Davao, Cagayan de Oro, New York, New Hampshire, Arizona, Florida, Texas and Kansas armed with a laptop, a software, a PowerPoint presentation and a supply of Filipino spunk.

She signed up three big clients in her first 10 sales trip.

Today, MEGO is the Philippines' largest "one-hundred percent MT" company, with 130 workstations. From a few square meters in one floor back in July 2000, MEGO now occupies four floors of the same building where it began.

MEGO also has an interesting production strategy. "MEGO text is in-house, sub-contractor, which is sells MEET (Mera Expert Satellite Team). A production group of MEGO, the MEET is an innovative management concept with permanent employees, flexible work arrangement, control span, sub-contracting, "Separation," entrepreneurship and mera-key business operations," says Simeon-Florendo.

MEGO owns accounts MEETs owned by IT entrepreneurs and three corporate MEETs that serve as the quality assurance team. Each MEET receives P5,000 to P10,000 for all its future employees, training upgrade every quarter with MEETC, e-learning Program for MEET administrators and business owners. "MEET is more than a business-to-a-box. It is a turnkey approach to setting up an outsourcing business. It is a nurturing environment and a learning organization for MEET owners also," just learn, they also earn," said Simeon-Florendo.

The CEO ascribes her company's success not simply to hard work, spunk and luck, but to the company's Christian values and its social outlook of its mission to give back to the community. "We participate in the following scholarships in our various localities to qualified students, and by helping those from disabled communities. Our pay is forward by donating a forward Santiago livelihood center for every new MEETs we build."

MEDOW'S also offers other specialties such as the mocha cake and orange peel.

60-year-old bakeshop...

From page B1

Lilly. They plan to open another cafe this year in Makati.

Edith's became a household name because of its empanadas and other specialties such as the mocha cake, orange peel, but the empanadas remains the favorite of customers.

"Gihimo nilugo sa pag-bake ang Apu Ani." Edna says of Rosendo's Filoro Zamora. "Dugo niya unang ang bakeshop, wala siyang ibang trabaho kundi."

Even family records that the Sto. Tomas's empanadas were extremely big. "Kabir ordinary nabakid rin ang sise?" Filoro's kid serves the empanada in big sizes.

Filoro adds, "Ito ang proseso ng pag-bake ng empanada namin."

While they cannot divulge what makes the Hizon's empanadas different from others, they revealed that Maya Cake Flour helps in keeping it delicious. Hizon's has been using Maya Cake Flour in all its cakes and pastries for years.

Besides the cake flour supplied by Davao Commodities Corp., Hizon's uses other Maya products like Maya Hotcake Mix, Gold Medal flour for buns and Maya brownie mix for chocolate pastries and cakes.

Although there have been offers for franchising, the heirs of Ani and Inocencia Hizon would rather keep the business within the family. To that way, we can assure the customers of the high quality of baking and very personalized service," Francis explains.

There's more to...

From page B1

including a one-year internship at the USAF Hospital in the former Clark Airbase, he went through a five-year training in general and plastic surgery at the University of the Philippines General Hospital.

For another two years, he undertook training in cosmetic surgery at Israeli Clinic in Michigan as a fellow teacher fellowship brought the doctor to extensive training in surgery at the Cook County Hospital in Chicago, Illinois.

Lucero teaches at the UP College of Medicine and he offers training programs for practicing plastic surgeons both here and abroad.

The doctor also makes it a point to do speaking engagements overseas and attend international conferences on his field as his cosmetic business making offices or resources recognize the Philippines as a world-class destination for medical tourists.

Investments in such facilities and the efforts to build the country as a major destination for the traveling patients would be worth it, as recent trends point to the ever consistent expansion of the market in the years ahead.

Stem cell

The autologous stem cell transplant is an exclusive collaboration between Lucero and Antibes, reliaris.

Pangalinan had trained in clinical pharmacology and regenerative medicine, and a clinical research specialist involved in the development and promotion of adipose-derived stem cells and their clinical use. He is also the chief executive of Hong Kong-based Stem Tech Ltd.—the provider of the technology for the stem cell transplant.

He previous work with the French Foreign legion in Angola and Congo, according to documents, allowed Pangalinan to do specific research on stem cell therapy to ease pain and hasten healing of wounds. That's where he obtained faster recovery and minimal scarring results of the treatment.

Lucero, who is also president of the Philippine Association of Plastic Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeons and member of the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, claims the autologous stem cell transplants hold great promise of curing a wide variety of degenerative diseases—Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, cancer, diabetes, arthritis, spinal cord injuries and aging itself.

Process

Stem cells are the basic building of life, they are formed at conception and specialized to become the different tissues of the body. As people grow older and their stem cells in some parts of their bodies get depleted, the regenerative power of the body decreases.

This is why people succumb to diseases, disorders and to various problems that come with aging. In stem cell transplant procedures, doctors tap into the body's abundant stem cells to repair and replace injured or diseased tissue.

Unlike other stem cell transfer technologies that use cells from peripheral blood or bone marrow, the autologous stem cell transplant is the only one using cells from the body fat of the patients.

While the bone marrow process of harvesting stem cells takes several days, the autologous stem cell transplant takes only about four hours, according to the doctor. A patient has to first undergo a mini liposuction to extract 100 cc of fat from the body from which the cells are harvested.

The fat-derived cells collected are then processed in stimulating growth factors, isolated and infused back into the patient intravenously. The procedure is done in the operating room of a hospital under local anesthesia. The harvesting of the cell takes an hour while the incubation, stimulation and infusion into the patient take another three hours.

No moral, religious issue

Lucero says there are no moral and religious issues involved in the procedure since the stem comes from adult tissues and not the stem cells. This also means there is no problem in matching the tissue cells.

The body fat, according to some papers obtained from the doctor, is the best source of stem cells because it is rich in mesenchyme stem cell and that more than 100 times more stem cells can be harvested as compared to bone marrow.

Lucero's wife, Tinnie, was one of his first patients. Tinnie, who is now 46, attests to the effectiveness of the treatment not only in treating her mild Parkinson's disease but also in making her look better and feel more energetic.

"Not only does it treat diseases, it also gives one other beneficial side effects as bonus," the wife says, referring to the renewed energy she experienced after the procedure.

Humility or self-promotion?

A LEADER'S WAY

John C. Maxwell

IN THEORY WE AGREE THAT HELP-approaching leaders are expedient, but in practice, we are all tempted to put ourselves squarely in the spotlight. In our zeal to be noticed, we may choose to promote our person at cause rather than the mission of our company. The choice between humility and self-promotion is a central drama in J.R.R. Tolkien's "Fellowship of the Ring."

In the "Fellowship of the Ring," the lust of Middle Earth revolves around the magic Ring. Forged by the dark lord, Sauron, the King's potency is too powerful to be safely wielded by the purposes of good. Priding upon the pride of his Creator, the Ring poses a real temptation enough too great to be resembled.

With Sauron's evil forces amassing to recapture this all powerful Ring, the leaders of Middle Earth—elves, dwarves, men and wizards—meet to decide on the fate. Entrusting the Ring to Sauron would result in the death and destruction of all that is good in Middle Earth. Yet, no one dares to try to master the Ring's power.

After heated debate, the leaders of Middle Earth are forced to choose an incredibly risky strategy: They will secretly march the Ring deep into enemy territory and cast it into the lake of fire from which it was forged. This sets, and only this way, will the magic Ring be destroyed and Middle Earth saved from peril.

For the journey was entrusted to the Ring is entrusted to Frodo Baggins—a small, simple hobbit, who, in his humility, is the most resistant to the magic Ring's powerful allure. A warrior from each race (men, dwarves and elves) is chosen to escort Frodo on his secretive journey.

Boromir, a great leader of men, is selected as one of the companions for Frodo's quest. The relationship between Boromir and Frodo, entering on the Ring, points a contrast between self-promotion and humility.

Boromir: The self-promoting prince

Hailing from a great kingdom of men, Boromir is a hero to his people—a strong warrior who has long thwarted the forces of evil on the battlefield. A proud man, he is quick to use his influence for his people's contributions in the ever-against Sauron's armies.

In his arrogance, Boromir believes he can master the force of the magic Ring. Unbelievably, the Ring weaves him. Striking on the Ring's corruptive influence, Boromir attempts to steal it from Frodo. His betrayal costs him his life and nearly costs the mission to destroy the Ring.

Frodo: The humble hobbit

Small in stature, Frodo is weak compared to the warriors around him and continues in the midst of the deadly scorning him on his mission. Although he feels tempted in the task of bearing the Ring, Frodo realizes he is the best hope for successfully destroying it. His humility allows him repeatedly to resist the Ring's temptation. With the help of those around him, he successfully carries out his assignment, and Middle Earth is saved.

Level 4 to Level 5

Breakthroughs are made by people with a commanding presence like Boromir. Willful and self-important, these leaders charge to the forefront and often achieve substantial, but short-lived success. Boromir typifies Level 4 leadership qualities as described by Jim Collins:

- Egocentrical
- Charismatic
- High Performance
- Builds Short-Term Success, Not Sustainable

- Creates the Credit for Accomplishments

Impressive are built by humble, but confident leaders like Frodo. Unpretentious and sincere, such leaders patiently develop people and processes to position their organization for long term success. Frodo exemplifies the Level 5 leadership qualities enumerated by Jim Collins:

- Humble
- Praises Others for Victories Won
- Invests in Successors for Lasting Success
- Creates the Mission above Personal Prestige

Summary

Perhaps on those looms larger to leaders than successful pride. Self-important leaders become more sighted, and they lose perspective. Humble leaders keep the limelight, to turn focus on the future, and are rewarded with results.

Inspiration for this thought piece is attributed to Ray Bland's work, "Creating Ahead without Stoning Your Own Back," featured on: http://www.growleaders.org/get-thing-ahead.htm

For information on John Maxwell's in-house or public leadership or teamwork workshops, please email us at king@inquirer.ph or call 413-2099/2732 and ask for Jon or Bing. Text ANSWERS, DPI to 4422 (Smart) to get daily 140 leadership insights from John Maxwell. (ed/bm)

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Entrep-biz

Sunday **BIZ**

'Quality sales more than quantity sales'

How this garments firm is riding through a competitive business

VICTOR Tan

By Margie Quiroga Espino

THREE YEARS AGO, SOMEBODY VICTOR Tan knew that challenges lay ahead in his garments business.

The seven had changed since he set up Bobson's—an apparel line for male and female in 1987 under the Cecilia Garments Manufacturing Corp. from outright purchase of chic clothes by the department store, to consolidating, to setting up brand boutiques ... Tan now has been taking the franchising route to expand his ventures.

Although Bobson has grown substantially over the past 10 years, from 14 employees in 1987, to 300 workers today, Tan admits competition has grown tougher. The past years' influx of goods from China has also aggravated the situation.

With 150 outlets and 20 boutiques nationwide, Bobson's strategy today is to go for lower margins instead of volumes, from its sales, he says.

"If the margins are too narrow, why fight for volume. Go for less volume but better margins."

Tan explains: "If you are moving after a certain sales volume, you are in a position to slash price in order to line move your product, that way you will sacrifice your profit margin. But now we wanted to have more quality sales than quantity sales."

He also complains that people are buying less. He says instead of buying clothes, consumers buy cell phone load.

Bobson's chosen path for expansion is franchising.

"Franchising is our way to expand. We look for people with passion for the business," he says.

Although the franchising route was decided upon by Cecilia three years ago, Tan admits there were kinks that had to be ironed out over the past three years.

These include the internal systems, monitoring programs, delivery of goods, bar coding. The garments firm had to go a consultant to help iron out the kinks.

Today it has four franchisees and expects two more this year.

Bobson's market is the broad C with prices ranging from P299 to P999 for tops and P699 to P799 for pants.

More than half of its market are girls who are really drive style, comfort and price.

"Tan commences that girls aged 18 to 19 go for the brand and the style more while the 20-year olds and older go for the fit and comfort.

He also notes boys usually shop alone while girls have friends with them.

"Men are more loyal while girls like new brands," he says.

Creative Manila boys outdoors are more fashionable and go more for style while those outside Metro Manila prefer more plain and narrow designs.

The franchising fee for Bobson is P600,000 which includes among others the use of the trade name, the site approval, training for the staff, procurement program, marketing assistance.

The initial term is five years. There is no royalty fee but there are advertising and marketing costs. The required space is 60 to 80 square meters.

Although its marketing budget has been limited, Bobson has gotten a boost from having Aga Muhlach as its non-endorser. Tan and Aga are close friends and this would often get feedback from Aga on their clothes design.

Homegrown pizza business rises from the ashes

Text and photos by Cristina Arcadio
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LAOAG CITY—YOUNG INVESTrepreneur Candy Cabuya had no immediate plan to spread a chain of stores until she lost her china-and-old pieces and pasta business in a fire.

Her businesses literally went up in smoke in March 2004. She reported a loss of P1.3 million, covering a building, refrigerators, gas range, microwave oven, kitchen utensils, stocks of several boxes, cellular phone cards and over-the-counter goods.

"I reconstructed all my pizza recipes from scratch. I could not even remember the mixture of a sure recipe because I also lost my mother's home-made recipe book in the fire," she says.

Cabuya, 34, owns the homegrown C2di Cabuya Pizza Parlor chain here. She built her first store in 2000 as an addition to the original outlet that her mother put up in the 1980s.

The Cabuya had created a mark in the pizza-pasta business here as they started a tradition of pursuing homemade products.

Cabuya recalls hearing gasps in the site where her pizza outlet used to stand the day after the fire razed the building. Her store was located in an old building that used to serve as a movie house.

"There was still smoke at the site. Everything was a blur that day. I wanted to sweep away everything from my mind. I kept thinking whether the fire started from our ancestral house. I did not think about how much I lost," she says.

"But then I was recalling how much credit did the customers owe, too, or how much pizza boxes were stored because the fire department needed the space," she adds.

She did not have the heart to tell her mother (who managed the principal pizza outlet) how much was lost in the fire because, she says, "I was afraid how she might feel knowing that I lost a lot."

"I told her that I only lost around P500,000," she says.

"It was easier on me to get a grip (of how much I lost) because I am used to having nothing. Whatever I earned from the business was earned by sweat and toil. So when I could not reconcile was allowing such day-one outburst during anything and letting our persons down for not serving them what they have grown used to," she says.

Cabuya says she holed herself up in her room the rest of the morning and three days to recall her lunch to look for a space to rent.

But since she found no ideal space, she leased a lot on the same block where her pizza parlor was located and built a new structure for her new outlet barely a month after the fire.

She made key decisions in herself because her parents left for Metro Manila the day after the fire to work as maid servants.

She used some of her savings and the money she borrowed from her sister to build the structure, and started buying new kitchen facilities, including frying pans and oven toasters.

"It was a hectic time. I was fired by an inner strength to get things done. I was knocking on doors of my regular customers dishing out personalized letters and discount cards. I had a streamer fluttering on my new building that says, 'From the ashes, we will rise,' she says, noting that her opening day fittingly coincided with the Holy Week in April 2004.

Cabuya says her pizza did not let her down.

She generated P50,000 on her opening day in her brand new outlet, way above the P15,000 daily that her former outlet earned.

"I was crying inside my kitchen because of tears streaking down my face until it was all worth it because customers kept praising it," she says.

Her patrons returned to the city a year later and found their daughter managing two new outlets (aside the chain) in a chain of vendors, including her mother's main branch.

Cabuya put up her second store in three towns, three months later after she discovered that a three-car garage was going to set a pizza outlet using her trademark menus.

The cook set up a booth in Batac and capitalized on the name of Ghi and started selling pizza and pastries that were distinctly similar to the products of her former partner.

"It was downright unfair competition. She initiated all our products, her trade name was even 'C2 Pizza Pasta,'" she says.

She says her former cook's kitchen was unsuccessfully dubbed up when her former outlet started picking up.

From then on, Cabuya kept on expanding her business.

She opened a garden pizzeria in February 2005, which was scattered to her dining area to accommodate more customers.

She also opened another chain in Bantay town last year to test her entrepreneurial skills. She opened the Bantay outlet on the request of customers who were mostly from that town.

"After the fire, I became more aggressive in putting up more stores because I realized that everything can be taken away at once," she says.

Cabuya recently introduced her "C2di delivery subwife" where three delivery motorcycles and a mini-cab bring pizza boxes to several villages in the city and to people's stores in the towns of Pasuquin, Vintar, Burgos, Badoc and Paoay.

"We keep track of all the festivals and special occasions where there are public gatherings so my crew will be there to sell our products," she says.

Her delivery crew brings around 50 pizza boxes in their daily trips to the towns where there are big populations of students and government workers. The sales are usually higher when there are town activities like fiestas and public programs, she adds.

"The message of that fire remains to be beyond my comprehension. I just look at it as a way of letting me understand things from a different perspective," she says.

Cabuya sometimes walking that message by taking her business to higher levels. She is taking a course on entrepreneurship at the Asian Institute of Management to help her chart new business directions.

She has found a way of counting the blessings that have come her way upon the recommendation of her spiritual advisers.

Her new "baby" is a pizza outlet in Badoc town, which will open on March 11. She also plans to soon venture into franchising.

Sunday LIFESTYLE
Editor: Cheche Banal-Formoso

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SEAS Concert's Jeannie Gaudmore and new BMW CEO Andreas Bichler

GORGEOUS couple Cecile and Robert Lilius

BMW CEO Dr. Joerg Bresser, Ina Princess and Lito Gorman

TV HOST Edu Manzano and group couple Digna and Edwin Arca

CAR enthusiasts Charlie Carmona and Lilibeth and Pepsi Campos

Baby, you can drive my car

The BMW Art Car collection combines art and speed

SOLEMN Hezzoff, Idra Andaya, Lulu Tan Gan and Boris Dibo

HAUNTSTIC director Freddie Santos, Raul Manzano, Manchet Dizon and Jojo Dungano

DOES ART IMITATE LIFE OR is it the other way around? Life becomes more vivid and vibrant once injected with a touch of artistry. Indeed, there are so many great examples of infusing art into installations other than the usual canvas.

To the sheer delight of car enthusiasts, art aficionados and stylish fashionistas, BMW recently launched the Philippine exhibition of the world-famous BMW Art Cars. The Ayala Museum played host to the works of renowned artists like Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Frank Stella and Ken Showcase, except none of it done on traditional media.

A total of 11 internationally acclaimed artists were commissioned to create "rolling sculptures" by painting on different BMW car models and these art cars have been traveling and impressing the world ever since. All the artists are represented in the Ayala Museum show, albeit some only via glass-encased scale models of their art cars.

The BMW Art Cars Collection is on display for free viewing until the end of the month. The awesome works also have amazing videos of some of the artists working on the cars.

TESSA! Reyes Prieto-Valdes

As I rushed in wearing a few kilometers-pressed suit, I spotted BMW Philippines CEO Dr. Joerg Bresser, who was headed back to BMW headquarters in Munich that same evening. He quickly carried me into the air and we posed for a farewell photo. The first time I featured him in this column years ago, it was a silly photo of him toying around with my bright orange feather boa. We still miss his cordial, easy sense of humor.

The new incoming president, Andreas Bichler, was introduced that evening. Following Doctor Bresser has respect his shoes- your shoe here and I am sure the new presi-

MORE /E4

GOLDEN classmates Marilou Quingsoy, Marilou Lopez and Mariki Prieto with Joe Quingsoy, Juvenal Sulmo and SM tycoon Henry Sy

HSBC CEO Mark Wakeman and family with Sarah

HSBC SVP Private Banking Alona Limeñas and Joe Vargas

HSBC PB Jet Cot Manner and Global Market's VP Corrie Perfecto

Nature at its best at Ayala Greenfield Estates

A wide expanse of sky and countless trees, a historic mountain that looms majestically over the southern sky, and an expertly designed golf course that brings together the best of these elements to create a world-class sport challenge. Some would call this a personal paradise that combines nature at its grandest and leisure at its most luxurious for the most discriminating of residents. Ayala Land Premier calls it Ayala Greenfield Estates.

This 588-hectare development 30 minutes south of Alabang provides pristine views of nature's grandeur anywhere you look. Each home is an intimate dwelling amidst landscaped grounds and flora, providing a magnificent backdrop to any family scene. Most importantly, the near-mountain breezes of Mt. Makiling comfort both mind and body.

Clearly, Ayala Greenfield Estates' range of amenities and conveniences are distinct from any other subdivision development because they are set amid the wonders of Mother Nature. A 15-hectare Nature Park with green groves and other amenities such as an open playfield, tree groves, bike and hike trails, a skating rink, a fishing lagoon and ramp and picnic sites, provide more than the usual community playground for your children to enjoy.

The Village Clubhouse is the perfect spot for bigger social gatherings with neighbors and friends. With different-sized social halls, function rooms and even a coffee shop, you can easily share an idle chat with visitors from the metro or have that much-awaited reunion with relatives from all over the world. The renowned natural beauty of Mt. Makiling will serve as an endless conversation piece.

Most importantly for the discerning golf enthusiast, the Ayala Greenfield Estates' 18-hole, all-weather, championship golf course created by world-renowned golf course designer Robert Trent Jones Jr. will surely challenge golfers of all skill levels. Each round is a unique gaming experience because the course is skillfully designed according to the lay of the land — find the challenge of strategically placed obstacles presented by the meandering hills and natural slopes of the mountains. This sprawling golfer's haven is exclusive to you and fellow Ayala Greenfield Estates residents, making daily life a true luxury of your friends.

Living in Ayala Greenfield Estates is being seamlessly integrated with the flow of nature — a respite from stressful city living, which many Filipinos both here and abroad truly look for in a home. Owning a piece of nature at Ayala Greenfield Estates is the closest you can get to a perfect reward for those who have become accustomed to the best that life has to offer.

Developed by Ayala Greenfield Development Corporation, the Ayala Greenfield Estates community is managed by Ayala Land Premier, the name for the best high-end real estate developments in the Philippines. With Ayala Land Premier's innovative designs, exceptional engineering, and superior property management, you are assured of a distinctive home that possesses value over time, with daily conveniences and needs well-anticipated and taken care of for an unmatched, luxury lifestyle.

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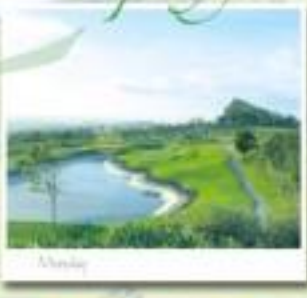
For further information about Ayala Greenfield Estates, please call 728-7000, log on to www.ayalalandpremier.com, or email mls@ayalalandpremier.com.

Expansive playgrou



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To arrange for a guided tour of Ayala Greenfield Estates, please call for a representative at 728-7888, log on to www.ayalagreenfieldestates.com or e-mail us@ayalalandpremier.com

AYALA GREENFIELD ESTATES

MIKEE Cojuangco-Jaworski, Jaime Z Abad de Ayala, MCg Tjamsens, Jojo Guingona, Pancho Escaler, Emil Clarenzo, TJ Clarenzo Lizada-O'Brien, Quincy Castillo, Mahmud Arain, Bee Cabrera, Bee Bautista

Baby, you can drive my car

From page 11

dent will as well.

Sipping from Napa Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay wines from the Wine Club, an elegant crowd milled around and admired the exhibit, an interesting note is that the car owners in hooded up all the way to date of first in Germany. Of course, in one-on-one snap these artworks anyway, because there's no gas in the cars but I still made sure I didn't set off any alarms as cool friend and photographer Willy Saw took my photo "behind the velvet rope" to get me closer to the Ray Liotta custom BMW 328i.

From the groovy '70s to three '80s and now, '90s groups, the BMW Art Car Collection is a depiction of the cultural trends of our era. The collection has been showcased in prominent museums such as the Louvre in Paris and the Royal Academy in London.

PRESIDENT Tea House Restaurant manager Judy Quan and staffer Chinoiserie

INQUIRER columnist Winnie Monsod and Carol Ilj

HSBC lunar year gig

There have been numerous changes of the guards in the corporate world lately. Surely

ALL IN THE FAMILY Paying Cojuangco, Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski and Isa Guingona

HAPPY shoppers Jackson Hung, Jaelynn Pio, Popoi Gamboa and Jojo Ongsiako

HOHO! Ilj Sr, Z Abad de Ayala and Bowsler

Text continued from HSBC CEO Warner Manning at this year's HSBC Pre-Boar Chinese New Year Party. The new CEO, Mark Nicklinson, has quickly filled in Warner's extra-large shoes, framing the premier corporate climate of the bank to a lavish banquet, plenty galleries and well-staged, traditional Chinese opera song numbers.

The entrance to the Makati Shang ballroom was festooned with scenes from a Chinese Emperor's court, where guests could pose with a fully adorned emperor and empress. I heard the host rolling out the welcome of the lion to Chinese consular as I entered the affair, late as usual. My modern Chinese attire, by creative designer Pauline Ramos Shaw, was a subtle price for most number of red items.

'Feng-shui' watch

Together with all my Chinese accessories was my new, cute piggy-strapped Swatch watch from GH Time Depot Megastore. The brought the special-edition Chinese New Year Swatch watches to my Hong Kong Fei Chai party last month. Aside from her prizes, World of Feng Shui compasses, fortune cookies and delicious-smelling Lenox candles were also given away for a photo booth. Rattic Flora in Alabang Town Center (tel. 807-1268 and 807-7979) provided beautiful floral arrangements.

To get my house all decked out, I headed to Chinatown with fresh '94 classmates Jojo Ongsiako and birthday girl Popoi Gamboa. Filled with jade charms, silky, Kiat-kiat and golden piggy banks, an anticipated annual fix-over is with my personal shopper, Jocelyn Yao. He was amazed I knew more about feng shui than he did.

Knit empress

One of the participants was knit-inspired Lolita Tan Gam. She is one of the exciting emerging store merchants opening in Greenbelt 5 later this year. Her notable love, comfy-yet-luxurious knit wear, L Ltd., is the ultimate home holiday wardrobe integrating knit threads of cotton and rayon. That evening, at the opening cocktails at Greenbelt 5, Lolo explained to me how difficult it was to weave that fabric and come up with high-style, avant-inspired creations. The free-spirited designer has indeed, built herself a fashion niche to know!

Fantastic 8

From art cars to fashion car to mall art, an exhibit of super-sized photo abstractions called "Large 8" is being displayed in the super-sized-as-well SM Mall of Asia. Eight esteemed photographers, including National Artist for Visual Arts Ben Cabrera, have collaborated on this monumental exhibit that will be touring SM Malls from Baguio, Clark, Davao, Iloilo to Cebu. These grand-scale artworks are at MOA until tomorrow and then head to SM Megamall on March 21-27.

The mega-wedding honored recipes Henry Sy and his daughter, Tessie Sy Coson, "destructing" the show by setting off a false dynamite plunger, which in turn started a shower of confetti and sawdust from the top levels of MOA, all to the outer-space musical strains of Strauss' "Also sprach Zarathustra."

Also part of the "Large 8" are Jojo Guingona, of the Century Club of the Philippines, and Arlene Zobel, who I'm sure would love to have my car. Sit Gerald's near Ayala Malls. Each of the eight are veritable artistes in their own, so it was amazing to see how all had cooperated, shedding their individual egos, all in the light of a higher purpose....an art arts rule.

If life were to imitate art, perhaps our neighbor, in a similar fashion, the Swiss pagan filled with stories about temptations and the shedding of egos, all for the higher purpose of nation building. Now that would be something to see!

E-mail me at negrito.ua@inquirer.com.ph

HSBC SVP and Marketing and Product Development Head Eunice Narzoles (Mega's Lorraine Betancourt and HSBC SVP and Personal Financial Services head Martin Cook

Sunday LIFESTYLE

Church tours

SIMBAHAN ng Tanauan

MUSEUM ON THE SUFFERINGS OF Christ through the Way of the Cross on Holy Thursday, April 5, in the historic province of Batangas.

This seven ancestral churches including the San Sebastian Cathedral in Lipa City with its ceiling of painted panels and the facade restored to its 1873 appearance; Our Lady of Guyanay Shrine, which houses the Virgin Mary's image that appeared in the area in 1602; the parish of San Andres Labrador in Cuenca with its Gothic elements; the Taal Church, declared a national shrine in 1954; and the Simbahang Tanauan cited in poetry in Renaissance and church styles.

Participants can choose between the P1,200 package without lunch or the P1,500 package with lunch in Taal Basco. Free air-conditioned coasters are available for the tour. Tel. 4266093 and 4266583, mobile numbers 0917-8279581 or 0917-5278680.

Bulacan, Pampanga churches

A Lenten tour of the churches of Bulacan and Pampanga will be held on Maundy Thursday, April 5.

Organized by Inscribe Tours (8405912 or 5758233), the itinerary in Bulacan includes the church of Sta. Maria rebuilt by Franciscan friars in 1892 after it was destroyed; Sta. Monica in Angat, a masterpiece of Baroque architecture whose interiors are considered one of the most beautiful in the country; and the heritage town of Bustos, where ancestral houses of revolutionaries still stand.

In Pampanga, considered the culinary center of the Philippines, first stop is Angeles City for lunch, class-B visita and pasalubong shopping.

Buffet lunch will be at the Hukbalahap Clark Field Resort. Three churches will then be visited—Immaculate Conception Parish, Holy Rosary Cathedral and Cathedral Convent. Last stop is Guagua Church, one of the oldest in Pampanga and an architectural gem, with interiors done in the Ionic style and exterior in Doric.

Travel photo contest

Cebu Pacific (CEB) and its in-flight magazine, Smile, celebrates the airline's 11th anniversary with a photo competition.

Eleven prizes, one for every year of CEB, will be given away.

Just e-mail [cebu.edit@ink-publishing.com] your favorite photograph taken at any Cebu Pacific destination for a chance to fly for free and see your photos on the next issue of Smile. The caption should indicate where the picture was taken and why you like it.

You may also send by mail mail to: Smile Photography Competition, Ink Publishing, 67B Amoy St., Singapore, 069917. Deadline is March 31 and winners will be published in the June/July 2007 issue of Smile. The airline's website is www.cebupacific.com.

Tourism promoter

Manukan Cliff Beach Resort and Hotel is a traditional prime destination in Cebu, Batangas. Several of its guests have returned year after year for a tranquil vacation and to enjoy water sports or just bask in the peaceful environment. The only resort in the area accredited by the Department of Tourism, Malabrigo Bay (tel. 7325202, 8393085, 7536665-85; www.manukangbayan) is active in promoting domestic tourism, especially to southern Luzon.

Five-star hospitality

Qatar Airways showcased its award-winning five-star hospitality at Fitur, the first big tourism event of the year which was held in Madrid. Fitur is one of the biggest tourism fairs in the world and the most important exhibition for Latin America. The airline gave lipstick and other travel kits for guests a glimpse of its expansion plans that will include routes like Bali, Indonesia. Its 42ft Ideti, Vietnam; and Chennai, India. For 55 spices, Qatar Airways can fly them to Madrid and the rest of Europe via Doha.

Special graduation offer

The Bellevue is hosting a Graduation Promo March 15-April 15 (tel. 7714311). For P4,500+ on weekdays and P4,000+ on weekends, new graduates can avail of deluxe room accommodation. The package includes buffet breakfast for two, unlimited breakfast buffet for one session, two bottles of mineral water daily, welcome fruit platter, etc.

Graduates also get a 15-percent discount to food and beverage outlets, free premium foot spa or aromatherapy hair treatment for every hair and makeup service at The Bellevue Salon, and complimentary rides, among others.

Easter package for the family

Treat your family to a Great Easter Getaway Package at the Manor Hotel Plaza Ind. #454574 in Manila and (032) 2511111 in Cebu) in Cebu City April 4-9. Enjoy a two-night stay for P7,500 net or a three-night stay for P10,500 net, inclusive of daily breakfast plus a choice of either a buffet dinner or Sunday brunch for two. Go on a Visita Iglesia on Maundy Thursday to the Mabolo Church, Sacred Heart Parish and the 400-year-old Sto Niño Church. Transportation will be provided by the hotel. Join the Way of the Cross at the Colonial Gardens on Good Friday and the Salubong and Easter Mass at the hotel lobby on Easter Sunday. Fun activities will be organized for children, including activities Egg hunt.

THE HABAIT stylists as seen from a Peninsula Manila room which features Pinoy touches

Beyond the standard

The Peninsula Manila has broken out of the predictable mold to position its property as a world-class hotel that's both uniquely and unmistakably Filipino

FLAT-SCREEN TV is a view o

By Alan Y. Vergara

HAVE YOU EVER EXPERIenced waking up with a start in the middle of the night in a supposedly familiar bedroom only to discover a bit later on you part the drapes that you're in a strange city hundreds of miles away from home? Dumaan ako.

Frequent business travelers and participants' tourist who live their lives in suitcases know what we mean. Instead of giving their guests something new to marvel at, not a few hotel owners have become blind captives of their own standardization hell o world sameness.

In their desire to maximize a standard look, and eventually cut down on costs, not a few hotel chains the world over have adopted a cookie-cutter approach when it comes to rooms—from the choice of the side tables, paints to the drapes, wall papers to the carpets, lamp shades to the alarm clocks.

It doesn't matter if the overall look a Mediterranean, Scandinavian or modern resort, the work is each workaholic often go beyond bedroom to include such public areas as corridors, lobbies, swimming pools, gardens, and sometimes even gyms.

Such a tried-and-tested approach, although comforting for some, can be quite boring and monotonous to many, especially to jaded and adventurous travelers. Indeed, never has the phrase "been there" gained such a derisive meaning.

In their desire to play safe, hotels also deprive guests of experiencing, if only within the confines of their bedrooms, a sample of the local flavor unique and endemic in a particular region or country.

With the recent renovation of its lobby and ballrooms that make up the hotel's Makati tower, the Peninsula Manila has broken out of this predictable mold to position its property as a world-class hotel that's both uniquely and unmistakably Filipino.

At the same time, the hotel has beefed up a number of amenities and amenities to further pamper guests in keeping with its new interiors. for instance, it equipped each of its rooms with a 42-inch plasma TV.

LOCALLY made divider screen

A HONG KONG-BASED design firm worked with local suppliers to furnish each room.

THE warm, Filipino look extends to public areas such as the dining place in the executive lounge.

Presumptuous in-laws take control of couple's property

DEAR EMILY,

There's a saying that "parents-in-law, sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law are, outlaws." I guess nobody would disagree with this statement, except for a few.

We lived in a compound for more than 10 years with my husband's parents and sister as neighbors. When my husband was offered to work abroad we decided to padlock our house and I lived with my own mother in the province.

We left our things for safekeeping with our parents-in-law. Recently we acquired another house to my birthplace and my in-laws learned of this.

Since our first house was vacant and padlocked, the sister of my husband's wrote us about the plight of one of their brothers who's married and jobless and solicits the man supporting.

While none of my husband's other brothers volunteered to support their jobless sibling, this sister asked my husband to extend help.

They talked by long distance and one of the plans was to rent our vacant house and give the monthly payment to this jobless brother. The other plan was to give them a one-time cash assistance.

Those were all in the planning stage but this sister decided to implement immediately the first option without giving us time to approve or disapprove.

My husband and I know that this brother is lazy and a tenant, among other things. We sent his sister a text message saying we decided on the cash assistance instead of letting our house be rented.

She begged us not to overturn her decision because she said she would not have the money to support the jobless brother. We nearly doubted to find out recently that the brother recently rented out our house to a couple without informing us and without a contract of lease.

My husband's siblings were clearly to enhance and lord it over us. The jobless brother unashamedly wanted it our and, with only a by-year lease in tow and your husband, appropriated the rental for himself as well.

First, are you positive that this house is the compound is under your and your husband's name? Second, did your husband have a written agreement with this tenant regarding use of the place?

If he did, did you also give your consent as his wife and signed the agreement, too?

Our interpersonal connections with relatives and friends in the Philippines are so casual and so devil may care that most of us take many things for granted.

One example is what your husband's relatives did to your house.

Just because it was empty and you did not seem to need money from it, the jobless brother unashamedly wanted it our and, with only a by-year lease in tow and your husband, appropriated the rental for himself as well.

According to a lawyer, if the document for the house are all in order, you and your husband can file an action "for unlawful detainer" against this sister and brother who are using your property by purposes other than what was mentioned by you.

What is it about this brother-in-law that is making him dependent on his siblings for support? Is he addict to his different ideas? If "frustrated" is not there anything he can do to support himself and his family. What about his wife, is she adulterant as well? Could they be as down and out of luck to be built on helpless and unable to find work and earn anything at all?

Or are they on this dependency mode because they know that their brother, financially well-off siblings (meaning your husband and his sister) can provide for his family handily?

Uh, oh ... if that's the case, isn't that a terrible waste of resources—healthy, breathing, thinking individuals wanting in the sidelines for hand-outs?

Beggars should at least have the decency not to bite the hand that feeds them, as this brother did to you and your husband.

Give them one last chance to explain what they did. Then, regain possession of your home. If everything else fails—sue them. They do not deserve your mercy.

E-mail the author at emarvels@inquirer.com.ph, Subject: Lifestyle, or send your letter to Reader, Lifestyle Section, Inquirer, 5th Floor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5 Yakal St., Makati City. *Letters to Mr. Marvels on how the program "Kalbaran Ngitngit," 7:25-8:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, on dzBB 594.3 FM.*

TMF Peninsula Manila's Ayala tower (right) will undergo renovation sometime next year

the local hotel rooms.

re streamlined

...ment upgradings in China repeatedly ...ost of its kind among Philippine hotels. ...e same client, the hotel opted for darker, ...streamlined furniture pieces to go with ...flat screen TV and give guests more room ...

...implementing the overall look is a bed ...panel with remote-control capabilities to ...e the room environment to the touch of a ...

...the overall look is distinctively of Fil ...coloniales themes in," says Joseph de las, ...Peninsula Manila's public relations man. "The choice is in keeping with the Penin...chain's global theme of adding a touch of ...flavor in each of its properties."

...ch room at the Makati tower is now ...ped in warm wood and locally sourced ...ra furniture, window treatments and ac...ories, including woven fabrics and a pair ...all woven mats of capiz.

...he old rooms were classified as mo...ern," says Denise Marie Elegario, a ...Manila executives and spacious mas... "We call the new look of our rooms as ...Philippines."

...e hotel's designers also clocked generous ...s of flora and fauna in favor of stylized ...s to cultivate talent for Filipino photogra...s, a jewelry collection and home items.

...e pair's images feature Philippine ...erfalls, rural life, handicrafts and a far ...ent not found in any other hotel room ...here's said abroad.

...her photographers' works rest in a photo ...ver we hold our pens," says Elegario. "Our ...ge guests find the images fascinating, ...e few Filipino guests, especially babb... ...ers, reverations with pride."

...ed to feature what their renovations are, ...dds. Bespoke guests find the Peninsula ...ila's new rooms "different, comfortable ...ess themselves."

...e room renovation began in April and ...ed in December. Hotel executives declined ...er a price tag. Similar work on the Ayala ...er will begin sometime next year.

...e hotel chain tapped the services of ...y Kong based Cibiada Bonifacio Leung ...r one name design company responsible ...renovating properties in Beijing, in ryan, ...design company worked with a local firm ...ip it source not raw materials and the la...ployers.

...ith such a development, guests have ...e reasons to stay awake longer and bask ...e unique look and character of their rooms ...r being completely lulled to sleep by ...surroundings that mirror Filipino ...ith such a la...ner hues.

...mail the author at mrgarcia@...r.com.ph

Seminar on Magic I AM Presence and Teachings of Ascended Masters
by: The Temple of The Presence, Inc

Mar. 16 to 18(sat), Mar. 17 (9-12pm; 2-5pm)
Valle Verde Country Club (beside ULTRA)
Capt. H. Javier St., Pasig City

Registration: P300 (includes snacks)
Contact: CP 0921-5609925, 892-2441846
Email: theoda@manilaarchitects.org.

Nokia 5300 XpressMusic: Keeping You In Tune To Life's Music

From the Beatles to the Backstreet Boys; analogue recordings to crisp electronic sounds; crackling vinyl to mp3 – music and mobile communication has come, as Tarboy Slim put it, "a long, long way together." Mobile phones have evolved from being talk tools to tools that let you do more than just talk, they let you sing along too.

Enjoying music is the 21st century is all about taking your music wherever you go and being able to share it with others. Nokia is right on top of the charts with the Nokia 5300 XpressMusic, a mobile music wonder that allows you to do just that, and more.

The Nokia 5300 XpressMusic saves you the trouble of lugging your entire CD collection wherever you go. This 3.5 baby can easily store up to 1,500 tracks on a 2GB microSD card.

"What makes this Nokia 5300 XpressMusic even more fun is that it has dedicated music keys that lets you have background music while you text or browse... capture clear and crisp photos of great moments with its 1.3 megapixel camera."

That's about 75 CDs combined! It also has a built in FM radio letting you really enjoy your choice of music wherever you are, and whenever you want to.

What makes this Nokia 5300 XpressMusic even more fun is that it has dedicated music keys that let you have background music while you text or browse.

Aside from grooving to your favorite tunes, the Nokia 5300 XpressMusic also allows you to capture clear and crisp photos

of great moments with its 1.3 megapixel camera.

Making a soundtrack to your life is even easier using the Nokia Music Manager. Copy songs from your CD collection, organize into playlists then transfer your music library from your PC to your Nokia 5300.

When silence starts to become deafening, you can also plug in the Nokia 5300 XpressMusic to music optimized headsets, or share the joy by connecting it to set of kick-ass speakers.

That's definitely going to get the party started! The Nokia 5300 XpressMusic is a fun mobile device that makes you tune in to a new way of life. Plug it, play it, and enjoy it.

Nokia 5300's Hip Tips

As if grooving to your favorite music on your mobile phone isn't cool enough, here are some tips that can make you and your mobile music experience hippee.

1. Wake up to your favorite tune. Assign an mp3 file of your favorite song as your alarm tone.
2. Special songs for special people. Assign a special ringtone for special persons in your phonebook.
3. Your mood, your music. Create different playlists that will suit your different moods.
4. Album cover. Take a creative photo of yourself, together with your friends, and set it as your wallpaper.
5. Be creative. Find other fun and cool ways to enjoy music with your phone.

Sunday LIFESTYLE

How's this for size?

INQUIRER Lifestyle tries on the fitting rooms of top shops around Metro Manila and finds some quite ill-fitting

By the Staff

TRYING ON CLOTHES FOR size is as much a part of the whole shopping experience as the hunt and the ultimate purchase. The trip to the dressing room can make or break the sale.

While some clothing retailers were thoughtful enough to take this into account—providing sufficient fitting rooms with proper lighting and a helpful staff to assist you, plus a few other extras—others seem to have taken it as an afterthought or an unnecessary part of the trade.

As a service to our readers, Lifestyle set out to check popular shops and department stores in our urban malls' fitting rooms were like. The criteria used were: size of the fitting room; cleanliness; basic amenities (hooks, shelves, locks, chairs); mirror and lighting; number of fitting rooms; and service. Each shop was rated for each category on a scale of 1-5, 5 being the highest and 1, the most confounding.

Now that only fitting rooms and services related to fitting were rated, not the merchandise. We hope rated retailers would take this as positive criticism and pay more attention to the state of their dressing rooms instead of just dragging this all and staying focused only on making a profit.

Next Sunday: our reviews of more malls, department stores and the final scorecard.

"We're happy with Sun—we save 50% on our bills!"

Jennie Dizon-Flores, General Manager, Dizon Farms

Dizon Farms would go bananas without the convenience and savings that Sun provides.

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ANG MAS MATINDING WESTERN UNION GOLD CARD℠ LIBRE AT MAS MARAMI NANG DAHILAN PARA MAGSAYA!

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WESTERN UNION

Selected shops— Robinson's Place, Manila

	Boys	Beach	Calvin Klein	Cinderella	Ensembles	Freeway	Folded & Hung	Guess	Kamiseta	Lacoste	Mango	Marks & Spencer	Pendleton	Polo Sport Co. Ralph Lauren	People II People	Sari-sari	Topshop
Size	****	*****	*****	****	**	***	*****	*****	*****	****	****	*****	*****	*****	****	****	****
Cleanliness— absence of clutter, etc.	***	*****	*****	****	**	***	*****	*****	*****	****	*****	*****	****	*****	****	**	****
Basic amenities— hooks, shelf, racks	**	*****	*****	**	**	***	*****	*****	**	***	****	*****	****	*****	****	**	****
Mirror & lighting	****	*****	*****	****	**	***	*****	*****	*	***	***	*****	****	*****	****	***	****
Quantity	*	*****	****	****	**	***	****	*****	*	*	****	*****	*****	*****	****	***	****

BEYG. The two fitting rooms are spacious but definitely not enough. Bundles of clothes block the whole area.

Some were nasty, some were nice— we're talking of fitting rooms in major malls

FENSHOPPE. Clean, roomy, functional and creative.

ROBINSONS PLACE MANILA

Seeing yellow

Text and photos by Irene C. Perez

Boys

There are only two fitting rooms, and there are probably a hundred items in the store. The nonstop let-big, but you have to line up for a long time to get in there. The big bundles of clothes blocking the way to the rooms are distracting, too.

Beach

Each room has a ledge where you can put small bags. There are fitting rooms both for the Beach and Beach side, so there's enough fitting time for everyone.

Cinderella

This is a shorter Cinderella branch than most. Rooms are simple although even again so size. The staff is helpful and attentive.

Calvin Klein

CK has a ledge big enough for your personal stuff and room to lay fitted wear for your groceries. It also has a fan for hangers so your clothes won't get entangled. These carpeted fitting rooms are quite right on a brand that appeals more to the A-B crowd.

Ensembles

"The only way to appreciate this branch is if you've no more than four baseball. The rooms are unnecessarily tiny that you will have what to know stretching your arms to fit a top, and the lights are turned off unless someone is inside.

Freeway

An adult Freeway had bigger cubicles and better lighting. The bulbs even on yellow here are cuddle so it really felt how the color of clothes turned with our skin tone.

Folded & Hung

Floor-to-ceiling mirrors, high ceilings, great lighting, six fitting rooms for a small shop, a big ledge you can actually sit on when fitting pants— now just don't want to try on clothes at F&H Robinson's? Then, you are pleased to buy 'em.

Guess

Big spacious, well-dressings some for a big shop and a delight. Salespersons are friendly and well-trained.

Kamiseta

The rooms are just enough for the borders of categories trying out new pieces after another. There's only one hook for all your stuff, and the drapes curtains don't really provide full door-like coverage. Precise and everything else, like the clothes, are average.

Lacoste

The rooms are neat and spacious, mirrors, hooks and locks work perfectly well, but we wish there were more than two fitting rooms in the Lacoste.

Mango

Mango is probably the only boutique in this mall that has more than 10 fitting rooms. The Spanish brand's trendy items have shopping-crazy Pinoys are. We have a problem with the drapes or total that cover us down, though. We wouldn't know if someone was in their dressing-an clothes, or they wouldn't know if you were inside doing the same. There's a big chance that someone could draw the curtains and catch you butt-naked.

Marks & Spencer

We love the six rooms subdivided with carpeted floors, multiple hooks and rapid-response mirrors. We also like the attendant staff. M&S fitting rooms could have been perfect—if they were not locked. For security reasons, they say. Asking the salesperson to open the door for us every time we want to try a garment or a wing turn off.

Pendleton

Pendleton is a specialist. From the walls adroitly covered up of a mixed media piece to the very accommodating attendants (you could just chill your head out the door and add items to get stuff for you while you're inside). Each cubicle is clean, roomy and well-equipped. What we like best are two full-height mirrors which allow you to see how the clothes fit on all angles. The functional and good complement the whole Pendleton fitting-room experience.

People II People

On the doors are lacky mini whiteboards with the following messages: "We have

WALPH! Lauren gives us the pampering expected from a designer brand.

PEOPLE II PEOPLE. The mini whiteboards with solutions on it are just lucky...

FOLDED & HUNG. We love this ledge which allows you to check how the pants fit while you're sitting.

...but it has enough space for your clothes, even your groceries.

CALVIN KLEIN. Fitting rooms fit for a high-end brand

and drinks allowed" and "Throw-up - needs-ads." We were half-expecting to find a "Breast-smith ahh!" warning somewhere. The rooms are ample and amenities are okay, but a certain odd is to need an escape going the area a very money look. We love the big rooms, though.

Polo Sport Co. Ralph Lauren

The heavy curtain drapes, the mellowed lighting and the courteous staff created us of being in a photography studio. Tony there a standout with hooks perfect for all your stuff, and a silver standard to cast you get tired. Ill, tea perhaps the perfect fitting room. And we swear, the mirrors seem to make us look thinner.

Sari-sari

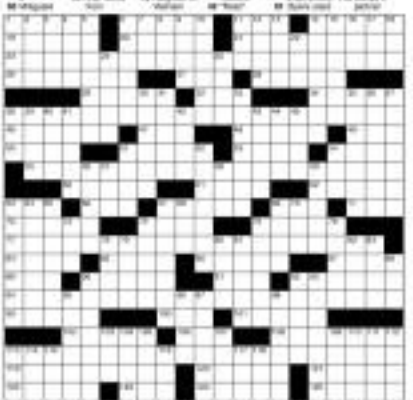
Sari-sari is very promising based on window display, but the fittings some are dark and dirty, not a very appealing combo for would-be buyers.

Topshop

Everything is average. Rooms are spacious and clean, there is enough space for your stuff, and we were glad of the multiple hooks and mirrors.

SUNDAY CROSSWORD

PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo — PACKAGE



answer on page F4

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LISA MACUJA-GUZMAN, Ballet Manila directress, with summer workshop students

Enrollment for summer ballet begins March 17

ASPIRING BALLERINAS AND dancers will get the chance to dance with the Philippines' foremost classical ballet company as Ballet Manila holds its 11th Summer Workshop, "Fun Dance 101" April 10-May 25.

Young people 16 years old and below could learn from two of the country's finest dancers—Lisa Macuja-Elizalde, BM's artistic director and principal ballerina, and Osias Barroso, artistic associate and ballet master.

Now entering 11th season, BM's summer workshops have produced some of the country's finest talents, like Christine Bacon, who has trained with her company since she was 10.

At 18, Bacon received the silver medal at the 8th New York International Competition in New York. She is now on her second year as a company member of the Joffrey Ballet in Chicago.

The BM (i.e. 4M/8M, 4MW/8W or GIRLS/BOY) workshop classes are divided into four levels (beginners to advanced). They also include pointe, variations, pas de deux, partnering, boys' classes and adult ballet. A "baby ballet" class is for children as young as three years old.

Enrollment is from March 17 to April 14. Classes will culminate in a two-day recital, May 24-25, at the Star Theater.

Auditions for scholars and apprentices will be held on March 17 at 2 p.m. Registration is at 10:30 a.m. 1:30 p.m. fee is P200 per participant. Girls should be 11-16 years old, with a minimum ballet training of at least two years. Boys should also be 12-16 years old, but need not have any formal training.

BALLET Manila summer workshop scholars

SAYO: Boxed books...

...ICKY floors...

...AND bare tiles.

ESPIET: Neat and spacious, with a real working area

CINDERELLA: You call this a bed?

...SHABBY, definitely not chic...

Industrial look

HER Decor's in store badge

FREEWAY: Making every square inch count

TOPSHOP: Save in as many pieces as your waist, that!

GLORIETTA

From scary corners to cozy-with-futon

Text and photos by Chacha V. Maral

Bayo

Words down the aisle in cobalt-blue, and within seconds that's just as bad. A fitting room as its old song is littered with icky hairs and dust bunnies that are literally rigorous. At the counter, wrong, we tested the sales staff's fetishisms by quizzing us at its (non-occupied) dressing rooms, diametrically planting one sniff on the comfy chair (plus point for that) to catch her attention. She completely ignored us and continued chatting with the lady guard. We asked if the rooms were occupied, she just nodded, turned her back and chitchatted again. She didn't offer to look in. Re-dressing rooms in the mirror using cabin-luggage-empty. By the way, if there are finally going to be retail, we found a crumpled paper and a bangle on the floor.

Bench

For a store its size, this Bench branch doesn't seem to have enough fitting rooms. The four cabins are tiny, too, artificially lighting. Were they constructed with midget shoppers in mind? There's always a queue of annoyed-by-rash-with-arms-loads-of-jeans-and-skirters.

Cinderella

Considering a one-of-three-stores various dressing rooms seem to have ‘ghetto disorder’ written all over it. Unwelcoming — they with the locked necessaries. On the second floor, two rooms are next away in dressing

PEOPLE N PEOPLE: Body in need of a paint job

room library, a weary woman with exposed beams and imperishable locks, and littered with clothes and hangers left by previous shoppers while outside the sales staff chatted away.

Her Bench

It's a small store without, it seems, a provision for a changeroom. Rows of merchandise smothered on the narrow racks — hunting the dressing room. Besides a computer board, so there's almost always a long queue at its three stalls, especially during sale season. Simmering.

Ensembles

One of its four big stalls is a useless storage, with clothes hanging from the curtain-rod “door.”

Esprit at Cinderella

In contrast to the main Cinderella store, Esprit's dressing rooms are thoughtfully conducted with lighted and upholstered benches at the waiting area.

Freeway

Freeway's hooked to the running and, alas, awesome. Glad to perhaps why the store felt it was okay to fix a dressing room station a teeny-tiny corner with a mirrored concrete column that took almost half of their room. Mirrors-on-and-mirrors-tall, too, as your toes to tiptoe to reach the hook. Stuff to literally and helpful, though.

Jaj

It has nine tiny rooms with dizzying mirrors that's so helpful but panicked turned out to be why that they constitute themselves by dancing to the hoot blaring music.

Kandoola

Energy-saving? Bah! For a popular shop, it's just plain bad service. Tens of thousand's four stalls had bulbs of lighting, but the staff asked if we wanted to get into one of those very small stalls which were also joint because, we could barely make out their bodies to face anything remotely of a mirror. Even our customers are stressed. We made up our minds to leave accessories to our air-conditioning either. When we stepped out, guess what we found?

The salesclerk jumping herself in front of the mirror.

Lee

Décor is dusty, but you have to step out of the room to see how your outfit looks in unlikely jeans because the rooms are secluded outside the dressing rooms. And, because of poor lighting, you have to step really close to the mirror. We didn't to public if we sit with the three glossy magazines. After exchanging sizes, the sales staff asked us to hand over the pieces we weren't buying (um, we didn't) to keep.

Levi's

The guy who attended to us politely introduced himself, and went on to pick a selection for us to try on. For a medium-size store, Levi's has a good number of fitting rooms conveniently positioned to not look like one of the mini cubicles. There are helpful pair-fit illustrations on each stall, plus a futon, too. But more shoppers rudely waits for your shopping bud does-not-dictate just outside the cubicles. Illness avert, though, for the lighting, which is a bit dim, and the poor air-conditioning, I sweat.

Mango

Mango's dressing room stalls have good big enough to allow other shoppers to ogle our cellulites. But we love it that they have enough ability to accommodate shopper's room of peek-a-boo-ers, plus a waiting area for our shopping companions. And great, too, that you can decide on many pieces into your

ZARA: Clean, well-organised, ceramics staff-darating!

stall to one go. This invited to some consolation, as of currently has only six cramped stalls.

Marks & Spencer

Helpful staff. Clean stalls. But we have to note to them, the hairs because you don't need them trying on lingerie?

Penshoppe

Bare-as-we-shall-see two full-length mirrors, plus a bright red fabric love. Nice!

People N People

Thoughtful enough to have a built-in seat-under-chair in each stall. A little paint job would help, however. The walls and floor look grimy.

Topshop

Stuff is good and staff is attentive without being pushy. If only you didn't mind by having like your arms in the same mirror-filled rooms. Psychologist to fix its air-conditioning! Who would want to try on jeans in here anyway?

Zara

Our top pick in the Glorietta area, Zara has no clothing-in-the-Zara changeroom-are-related in the-spa, unless they're almost like a market store — perhaps because its posh-looking fabrics fancy, not as a make-market mural. The stalls are clean and brightly lit, but staff is attentive but not overzealous. Top issue: many clothes-as-you want to one-to, no problem.

Selected shops-Glorietta

	Bayo	Bench	Cinderella	Her Bench	Ensembles	Jaj	Freeway	Kandoola	Lee	Levi's	Mango	Marks & Spencer	Penshoppe	People N People	Topshop	Zara
Size	**	**	**	**	—	----	**	**	—	**	***	**	***	**	---	****
Cleanliness — absence of clutter, etc.	*	**	*	**	—	----	***	***	----	***	***	***	****	***	**	---	****
Basic amenities — hooks, shelf, locks	**	**	*	**	—	----	**	**	—	**	****	**	**	***	***	**	****
Mirror & lighting	**	**	**	**	---	----	***	**	*	*	**	*	***	***	**	---	****
Quantity	***	***	**	**	—	----	***	**	*	*	*****	*	***	***	***	---	****
Service	**	*	***	***	—	----	*****	***	*	*	*****	**	****	**	***	---	*****

SHANGRI-LA MALL

Wood floors and gaping holes

Text and photos by Pam Pastor

Bayo

There used to be two hooks in the fitting room but now there's only one left. Also gone are the mirror and the bench that used to be in front of the hooks. I wonder why. I'm not sure what the shelf is for. It's good to see they have no fitting room in one store — considering how many shoppers they get, I'm glad to see that the dirty plastic chair was gone.

Bench

A big mirror, one hook and a single shoe's side of the fitting room. I'm not sure what the shelf is for. It's good to see they have no fitting room in one store — considering how many shoppers they get, I'm glad to see that the dirty plastic chair was gone.

Debenhams

Debenhams' fitting rooms have two mirrors inside, offering a 360-degree view while you try on the clothes. Three hooks, one long bar, large benches and, most importantly, flat-to-the-ground flooring. The wood floors are a nice touch, too. I was grossed out by the dirty, dusty floors in the other stores I visited, but no one offered any help though.

Folded & Hung

Folded & Hung's fitting rooms have heavy mirror doors that frustrated shoppers. Because they are heavy, the doors are almost always closed. There are stools all over the floor by the fitting area though, a definite bonus.

Kamiseta

Kamiseta in Shangri-La Mall offers

EYESORE: Topshop's counter mars its stylish claim to the fitting room area.

an impressive number of clean, white fitting rooms with dozens of hooks. Four hooks and a framed picture. The framed picture gets them bonus points — a breath of creative air among fitting rooms that don't even have anyone to be startled beside. We also like the setup in this store, and we're sure the insistent Backbeats and sophisticated upbeat-easier items, too. Now if the store can only do something about the service, things would be even better.

Levi's

Kudos to Levi's for the cool fitting room concept. The fitting rooms in Shangri-La were designed like narrow old lockers. Pretty cool.

Mango

Service was great. I picked one skirt each and was immediately offered to be led to the fitting room. When I asked for a little more time as I found choices other pieces, the girl waited patiently until I was done. The fitting rooms are different — uh-hello, I refuse to call them rooms. They're dotted circles with swinging cloth doors. The lighting was great, a little dark as if it's-bare-a-first-date ambiance of way. The funny thing about having cloth walls covering as cramped space is you can actually see movement in the next cubicle. The girl in the fitting room next to mine was overly enthusiastic about trying on her top first, at one point, I think I saw her elbow poke through the cloth wall. At least I hope it was an elbow.

Marks & Spencer

Marks & Spencer's fitting rooms at the Shangri-La Mall are inviting. The lighting is good, the doors have enough hooks and there's even room — not a lot, mind you — to change without bumping your head.

Topshop

I don't know it's one just me, but Topshop's fitting room was — hot — not a good, easy way to put it bad, darkly-way. I think the air vent was off. The light was off, too, and since I was pretty much ignored by the salesgirls, I didn't bother to ask for help. The mirror, which was in the fitting room area, was a bit of an eyesore.

PICTURE PERFECT: The framed image in Kamiseta's dressing room is a nice touch.

MARKS & Spencer's fitting rooms offer three-angle mirrors.

Selected shops-Shangri-La Mall

	Bayo	Bench	Debenhams	Folded & Hung	Kamiseta	Levi's	Mango	Marks & Spencer	Topshop
Size	**	---	****	***	***	***	**	****	***
Cleanliness — absence of clutter, etc.	**	---	****	****	****	---	****	****	***
Basic amenities — hooks, shelf, locks	**	---	****	***	****	****	****	****	***
Mirror & lighting	**	---	****	***	****	****	****	****	***
Quantity	**	-----	****	***	****	****	****	****	***
Service	*	*	**	**	*	---	****	****	*

PRETTY, functional Kamiseta fitting lounge

BAYO'S bus needs some cleaning

PETIT Marais does it plain and simple.

SM MALL OF ASIA

Eyesores and eye-candy

Text and photos by Fran Kangleh

Bayo

Bayo wins this award for having the most number of hooks. Also, those attractive canvas-like curtains of pastel-colored fabric. Sadly, they're also the worst for hygiene. Imagine the number of people who've tried on clothes in those fitting rooms. Ugh. Plus, the hooks are so close together that you can't even hang your clothes properly. Bayo, you're a disgrace.

Bench/Her Bench

With its grand array of mirrors and lights, Bench could just as easily host a bit more modest bits as its cavernous fitting rooms. What a clever combination to have the mirrors so throughout—a single hook, one huge room framed with (or lifted at an extra cost) for little angle, while seats, underwire bra-free second light. The door, which hosts a mirror, is placed on the outer side, to cut a little above mid-calf. That's how much leg (possibly up-toward pose-hitting) there is. Not to approved and re-finished on the door mirrors of the separate fitting room for all to see. Such wonders are the only things that seem abundant inside.

Hang Ten

What are cutbacks for next isn't to-hem-hang. Nor have I figured it out.

no customer is terrible right-mind would dare fit jeans outside the-to-day. Fittings rooms are average, period.

Kamiseta

Pretty and functional best describe the Kamiseta fitting room. Generously stocked with nifty hooks and bars, thick pink curtains, white upholstered seat, wide wall mirrors and soft lighting make for a cozy Barbie-doll-like fitting experience. There's even enough room for a girl to twirl in that adorable dress or skirt!

Kashieca

Small, but welcoming. Considering the size of the shop, Kashieca could get away with its cramped fitting rooms. Small doors they look chic and are equipped with floor-length curtain, clear mirror, shelf and hooks.

Mango

Mango has an array of fitting rooms. It's like a disciplined bunch of soldiers—curtains, orderly, efficient. But the rooms are no place for claustrophobes as they are small, with dark leather-like upholstery seeming to close you in.

Penshoppe

He's amongst from Penshoppe answered by his funky fitting rooms. The genius behind it deserves a raise for creativity combining wood, metal, fabric, glass and cement to dress up what would have been just a plain box. The fitting room had a different aura from the rest of the store, like you were in some lounge, upscale (high-end) trendy boutique.

People R People

The store sets the standard for loud-red fitting rooms. The simple layout actually works: full-length mirror mounted on the wall, built-in seat, sturdy big hooks and soft lighting. Located at a realted to area, customers need not even worry about exposing anything underneath (there's a bit of clothes decorations). Service was impressive, though, with a bit of enthusiasm and smile from the staff.

Petit Monde

Plain, simple fitting rooms consisted. But tidy layout of the shop. But the salesclerks were annoying and pushy. They showed us two clothes to try on even when I was vehemently shaking my head to protest. If nothing fits, one would feel guilty leaving the store without a purchase.

Topshop

Topshop gets passing mention but, if it wants to get its A, we suggest including floor length as fabric and a contained stall. Too linear, just to keep up with the trend image.

MANGO'S array on the ready

MIRROR-CRAZY! Hang 'Em outside

PASSING marks for Topshop's top line

FUNKY combination of decor at Penshoppe

WINCH room in Kamiseta style.

Selected shops—SM Mall of Asia

	Bayo	Bench/ Her Bench	Kamiseta	People R People	Penshoppe	Mango	Topshop	Petit Monde
Size	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	**	****	*****
Cleanliness—absence of clutter, etc.	**	**	****	****	*****	****	****	****
Basic amenities—hooks, shelf, racks	**	*	*****	*****	*****	***	****	***
Mirror and lighting	**	*	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****
Quantity	*****	****	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****
Service	*****	*****	****	***	*****	***	****	**
Regulations	****	*****	****	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****

MANGO: Perhaps they can do better than these drapes!

ZARA: Clean lines, tidy rooms

BAYO: Get a room—a storage room, that is.

Power Plant, Rockwell

Steamy vs spacious, neat

Text and photos by Anne R. Jacinto

Bayo

Bayo's fitting rooms bring to mind the movie "Transporting," when Frank Mackaper's character stops to join the "Dirtiest Hotel in The World." A cluster of dust and dust bunnies overcome, one of the hooks is missing and hangers are scattered on the floor. Environment, a downmade is dangerously waiting for its continuity the door. Ah, but we never should have expected so much. The way to the fitting room was enough to make you appreciate—clothing-shop on one side against a mountain of hangers. And did we say there was a woman busy with ironing? Did she do that the whole day?

Bench

Room size is reasonable; ceiling is high. No-clutter in sight, not a misplaced hanger or whatnot. Ah, if only all the lights were working...

Kamiseta

Oh, these eye-candy fittings rooms are certainly among the best to wear. They look good and smell great! Mirrors-on-both-sides, in-like. There's enough room for everybody. Wow, mirrors-and-a-chair, it won't be a long wait.

Levi's

Adjust the light to your liking at just the press of some buttons. There are two large mirrors, one in front and the other on the side, so you won't have to keep turning around to check your rear view. Very friendly and helpful staff as well.

Mango

Too-airy downside are those curtain-swing doors. Admit it, they do make you a little uncomfortable, especially when shopping on your own. Ironically, it's a place where you tuck-off your clothes. Anyone want an extra-tiny polka-dotted bustier. Otherwise, Mango's fitting rooms are okay. And what mirrors they have! No flattering you-look-slimmer than you actually are.

Marks & Spencer

Neat, spacious. Friendly sales personnel, just as expected.

People R People

Like anyone with a good pair of eyes, we know what clothes look good on us. Well, armed by our own standards. So, admired, restrain your staff from making unsolicited remarks on just-worthy-we-know-a-deal. Being helpful is great, but getting pushy is irritating.

Topshop/Dorothy Perkins

Is it-but-in here, or is it-but-not? The rooms look okay, but beware. It's charming but inside them? Be a busy-day-you might find yourself working-out a sweat while going through your possible purchases.

Zara

Two main fitting rooms were in one lonely row of the bold-red-hot sales. Women are regularly related clean of fingerprints, and there's a small couch-pod outside the rooms for friends to relax on while waiting for you to make up your mind.

KAMISETA: Room for everybody

BENCH: Too basic for comfort

LEVI'S: Cool lighting gadget

Selected shops—Power Plant, Rockwell

	Bayo	Bench	Kamiseta	Levi's	Mango	Marks & Spencer	People R People	Topshop/ Dorothy Perkins	Zara
Size	***	***	*****	*****	*****	****	****	****	*****
Cleanliness—absence of clutter, etc.	*	***	****	****	****	****	****	****	****
Basic amenities—hooks, shelf, racks	**	**	****	****	****	****	****	***	*****
Mirror and lighting	***	**	****	*****	****	*****	*****	****	****
Quantity	*	**	****	****	*****	***	****	***	****
Service	*	***	****	****	****	****	****	***	****
Regulations	***	***	****	****	****	****	****	****	****

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Sunday LIFESTYLE

Milestones

We welcome announcements of weddings and engagements. Submit names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, and good clear group and couple photos of the couple and a sketch of the bridal gown, if any, to the Inquirer, #5 Rue Jones Makati Central Post Office 1259 Makati City. E-mail to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. Inclusion of the bridal and groom's recipient(s) the wedding has already taken place. Announcements will be printed depending on space availability and/or in order of the senders.

BALBUENA-TORREFIEL

Pet Dominic Barrigo Balbuena and Dr. Phil-an Rose Torrefiel were married recently at Sacred Heart Parish in Cebu City. Rev. Fr. Eleuterio Fernandez officiated at the ceremony. Reception was held at the Sinulog Grand Ballroom of City Sports Club, Ayala Business Center, Cebu.

DELA CRUZ-CASTRO

Pauline S. dela Cruz, son of Carlito and Florita dela Cruz, and Dr. Gerdie A. Castro, daughter of Dominador and Ruth Castro, wed recently at Basilica of San Sebastian. Reception was held at Balsuarte de San Diego.

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CONDE-CACHO

Eddy Conde, son of Serafin (deceased) and Juanita Conde, and Sherry Ann Cacho, daughter of Alvin (deceased) and Rodelita Cacho, will be married March 18 at Camelot Hotel.

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FLORESTA-BERNARDEZ

Mark Floresta, son of Severo Domingo and Haydee Floresta, and Fern Bernardez, daughter of Ariosa and Ellen Bernardez, exchanged vows recently at the Church of the Risen Lord, University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City. Reception was held at the Ateneo High School Quadrangle, Ateneo High School, Quezon City.

YAP-REYES

James J. Yap, son of engineer Jaime and Atty. Ana Yap, and Ann Nicole B. Reyes, daughter of Tomas and Dr. Luz Bejar I. Reyes, wed recently at the Sacred Heart Parish Church, St. Sebastian St., Cebu City. Reception was held at the Salon de Ilgatha, Cuenca Ingeniería de Cebu.

SEGRE-BERMEO

Felix Jigo Gonzalez Segre, son of Alicia Bandala Gonzalez vda. de Segre of Sucgon del Sur, tied the knot recently with Asunta Estrada Bermeo, daughter of Beatriz Jimeno vda. de Cima of San Leandro, California, at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Philippines Manila Temple in White Plains, Quezon City. Reception followed at Peninsula Hotel Manila in Makati, Manila.

AGUILAR SILVER WEDDING

Marlin and Mabou Aguilar celebrated their silver anniversary recently at the Manila Cathedral in Intramuros. Reception was held at Place Montesa Trellis, Intramuros, Manila.

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MANSUETO-DELOS REYES NUPTIAL

A smooth sailing at last

THE NEWLYWEDS. Bhem and Lanie Mansueto (née Delos Reyes)

By Tina G. Santos

LILIANE DELOS REYES SAID IT WAS not love at first sight when she met her husband Vicente "Bhem" Mansueto seven years ago.

In fact, she thought he was cheeky for asking for her number as soon as they were introduced by a mutual friend during a party. Her husband has at work the next day and stole a kiss from her even before they became officially a couple.

Though it could have excited a slap on the face, the stolen kiss signaled the beginning of a beautiful relationship that culminated in solemn and simple nuptial rites at the San Ildefonso Church in Makati City.

But that's getting ahead of the story.

Mansueto was the first to admit that, just like any other relationship, theirs was not always smooth sailing.

The youngest in a brood of six, the Quezon-City groom had to pass through the proverbial needle's eye before he finally got the approval of his sister would be father-in-law.

Comic scene

"Her dad would always lay down the rules and guidelines in front of our relatives I visited her at home, to ensure it's love and I had to go home," Mansueto laughed, describing it as a scene straight out of a television sitcom.

His older sister also did not approve of the relationship because, at that time, he was still wooing to be awarded.

But the real test for the couple came in 2004 when he had to work overseas as a member of a cargo ship crew.

Delos Reyes expected the job and feared deep inside that a long-distance relationship might not endure. She thought the times they had together might not make up for the years of absence.

Before Mansueto left on February more-

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room's job nboard ship almost ut an nd to this omance

ing, he and Debie Reyes swore to be true to each other. They promised frequent phone calls, regular e-mail and occasional old-fashioned letters mailed with a kiss.

None of these promises, however, were Fulfilled—at least on Manzanito's part.

"I did not receive a call or a letter from him," she said. "I was clueless. I didn't know what went wrong [in our relationship]."

Heartbroken, Debie Reyes left her job as a supervisor of a Manila department store and accepted a job overseas as a luxury liner staff member.

Renewed promises

But Manzanito soon realized that it was still Debie Reyes for him. So he renewed his promises of fidelity and constant connection.

"Nonetheless you really won't realize how much a person means to you until she's away from you," he said. "It's funny but distance really made our hearts grow fonder."

When the couple came home in November 2005, Manzanito more than made up for lost time by proposing marriage.

But, being a classical daughter, Debie Reyes was not prepared to think about marriage yet, saying she still had a lot of plans for her family.

Manzanito, however, was not to be put off. Three months later, on Feb. 8, 2006, the two were married in civil rites at the Pasay City Hall.

The couple's church wedding last Jan. 27 was doubly memorable. It was not only the culmination of their love story but it also marked the 33rd wedding anniversary of Debie Reyes' parents, Antonio and Lilia, who were both teary eyed as they walked side by side their elder daughter down the aisle.

The bride was a picture of love and bloom in a princess-cut duchess-satin gown when she met her groom—accompanied by his mother Aurea and sister Dolly who took the place of his departed father Bernardo—at the altar.

Principal witnesses to the union were Rod Villanueva, Angelie Monge, Rodolfo Enrile, Arnold Cabanag, Avelino Manalo, Charita Ocon, Myrna Pangalangan, Belen Lopez, Nebie Briones and Wellington Santos, the bride's fraternal godmother.

The bride's best friends since college, Sherwin Cuison and Maryanne-Jill Bigbazo, were maid of honor and bride's maid, respectively.

Manzanito's best man were Daryl Ben Dimitri and Herbert Lapidario.

Candle- accolades were Regie Slade Magpayo, Orvic Ryffe Dalisay, Reiner Marvin Magpayo, Janelle Elaine Mamangun, Nikki Henares and Dolly Mae Marcia.

The occasion was a touching celebration of love, family and friendship. This was evident in the sparkle on the couple's faces as they greeted their guests at the reception.

Separate gatherings were also held for the couple's relatives in Cebu and Batangas.

Wedding gift registry now in Cebu

RUSTAN'S WEDDINGS & BEYOND, the gift registry program, will open at Rustan's Cebu (Shangri-La Mactan) on March 24.

Weddings & Beyond covers wedding gowns, jewelry, the latest cosmetics, toiletries, household furnishings and innovative gift ideas.

For the Cebu launch, the Marquee of Shangri-La's Mactan Resort and Spa will be turned into a bridal paradise.

Cebu's leading fashion designers will display their couture takes on the bridal gown.

The country's leading wedding vendors, suppliers and planners will also exhibit.

Clients may create their own personalized wish list from among several world-renowned labels exclusively available at Rustan's.

They may also inform friends and family of their gift registries with the Weddings & Beyond's registry notification cards.

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In addition, the service also provides clients assistance and information, such as wedding or party coordinators, product reviews, gift recommendations, and the latest information on the season's must-have best and abroad.

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- Don't forget Pacman refers to the boxing champion, not the videogame.
- Don't forget a fact can be gossip.
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BEA Bondoc at 4 years old with her physiatrist Donna Flores in Bosco and Nia's mother, Mencha Bondoc

BILL Stanton (right) with Steven Goh and Aaron Pascual

PURELY PERSONAL
Josephine Barcia

Filipino girl's cure supports cause for sainthood

THE MIRACULOUS healing of Rina Rondoc of a serious ailment elevated the cause to sainthood of Blessed Marie Eugenie, founder of the Religious of the Assumption.

Blessed Marie will be canonized on June 3 at St. Peter's Square in Rome.

Rina Bondoc, now 12 and a grade 10 student of Assumption College, will attend accompanied by her parents, Dino and Mencha Bondoc, and her sisters, Bia, Bego and Nia, and Mrs. Victoria Tabora.

When Rina, baptized Ma. Carmela Therese Eugenie, was 2 months old, she was brought to Dr. Blessed Hechanova, an eye doctor, because her mother noticed that she could not seem to focus. Rina was diagnosed with "eye eruption," a condition that affected muscles of the eyes. Dr. Blessed Bello confirmed the findings.

At 6 months old, Rina was brought to St. Peñafrancia Intercede, a pediatric ophthalmologist. Tests showed weakness of the muscles of the eyes. This meant Rina would never be able to read fine print without very thick lenses. But Intercede also said the problem might be coming from the brain.

Rina was brought to Dr. Myrna Ilagan, a pediatric neurologist, who suggested magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) of the brain. Dr. Benjamin Adajaro of the Makati Medical Center read the results. His wife, Dr. Hilda Adajaro, told Mencha to pray for a miracle.

Rina found intermediate to be the healer's sanctuary. When Mencha heard the news, she and her family started to pray the novenas for the intercession of Mother Mary's Eugenie. She made Rina wear the medal and relic of MME.

After two days, Mencha went to Dr. Ilagan who told her to pray because only a miracle could make Rina normal. The doctor assured of medications and consultations. But none of these things happened.

The baby was brought later to Shriners Children's Hospital in Manila upon the suggestion of Dr. Evangeline Poblete, pediatrician of Intercede's daughter.

Rina was a year and 2 months old when she was first brought to Shriners. Three doctors examined her but it was Dr. Carlos Rivera, a neurologist, who first diagnosed her ailment as "optic nerve dysplasia."

Four lessons, Mencha brought her daughter to the Motherhouse of the Religious of the Assumption in Paris. In the presence of the Mother General, Mother Cecilia Marie, and nuns, Mencha laid Rina on top of the tomb of Blessed Marie Eugenie and commended the girl's cure to her.

Mencha said a vigil light was already lit on the tomb for Rina's cure. Mother Cecilia also placed Rina's photo at the altar of their bedroom. In the provincial house in Manila, Sister Theresa put Rina's picture below Blessed Marie Eugenie's.

Today, Rina is a normal, active and cheerful 12-year-old, to her doctors' amazement. They call it a miracle. Those who wish to go to Rome for the canonization may see Mencha at 0918-9180856.

Novena

The Hispanic de San José is holding a nine-day Novena of Masses to St. Joseph March 10-19. Masses are celebrated at 6 p.m. by different priests. The Church of St. Joseph is located by Quiapo Boys helped put up an exhibit. Those who want their St. Joseph images exhibited can text Cecile at 0920-9133008. March 19 is the feast day of St. Joseph.

Lay Dominican Congress

The International Council of Lay Dominican Fraternities (ICLDF) spearheads a historic assembly, the International Congress of Lay Dominican Fraternities, March 17-24 at Pilar in the archdiocese of Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Congress venue is El Cenacolo, a former seminary converted into a multipurpose conference/retreat building. Its sprawling grounds provide a peaceful ambiance for social activities or meditation.

Some 80 national council lay Dominican presidents and heads of ministries and sub-ministries will discuss the theme "Lay Dominicans: Compassion in Preaching." The mission of the Order of Preachers, Rev. Fr. Carlos A. Aspiras Cossa, OP, is keynote speaker. Dean Belen Tangco, OP, heads the Philippine delegation.

Scholars

Ten high-school students will get scholarships beginning school year 2007-2008 to attend night classes at Jesus College in Taytay, Rizal. Students will be supported until they finish high school in 2011.

Bill Stanton, president and chair of Steve Group of Restaurants, and Linda Edwards of Better Chance Foundation raised funds through a charity night at Fish & Co. in SM Megamall.

With the opening of Fish & Co. in Greenbelt and Shangri-La Plaza and Kidzania in SM Megamall, Stanton and the Rotary Club of Guadalupe, of which he was former president, were able to raise P1.3 million for the Gawad Kalinga project to build 20 houses for the poor in Muntinlupa.

Fiesta

San Juan Nac, a barangay in Guimaras, Nueva Ecija, has been preparing for months for the fiesta of St. Joseph that will be marked on March 23.

Every Saturday, Marcelino "Mars" Nuñez, president of the Nueva Ecija Center for Culture and the Arts Foundation Inc., teaches in the chapel 20 children to draw, create stuffed toys and act. Mars is an artist with 25 years experience to honor.

An exhibit that opens March 23 will feature 15 stuffed toys of biblical characters and drawings. The children will also present a play.

Mars is continuing a tradition began by his ancestors in 1890. Pascual Nuñez's daughter Soledad was Mars' grandmother. She was the mother of Alicia Balanag, his mother.

This year's harvest may or is lagging as Pantabangan, a dam in Barangay Cabuluan, caused excessive rainfall in Cely Bajao, Holy Mass will be celebrated at the chapel.

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ANSWERS TO SUNDAY CROSSWORDS

Edna Emerita G. Valencia

ENTERTAINMENT

'Batad' featured in San Jose film fest; Gawad Kalinga film premieres in LA

LOS ANGELES—ONE UNEXpected benefit of writing this column is hearing from old friends, schoolmates, town mates and readers.

I got an e-mail from Her Salanga, who was part of our gang of buddies in the late '70s through the early '80s that explored Puerto Galera and hence known beaches all over Luzon. As the associate producer of "Batad: Sa Puting Ulap," Her shared the good news that the film is included in the Cinequest Film Festival in San Jose, California which ends today, Sunday. Fresh among USA-pilot movies in the fest, the award-winning San Jose Mercury News highlighted "Batad" and five other films in an article.

The paper's Bruce Newman wrote: "Ag-Ag Ap (Al Chris Gaban) works in the rice terraces farmed by his father in the Philippine countryside, but he yearns to move to the big city, as so many other young people in 'Batad' are doing. From his little-seen vocation (apparently why they have to say in such a far place. Ag-Ag is convinced that the film may steward Manila, or some other, even more impossible dream metropolis in Japan, is owning a new pair of shoes, and to earn the money it will take to buy them, he becomes a tour guide to hung-overlanders.

"The real beauty of Bengli Gaerlan's directorial debut is how far away from our own world it transports us, and how deeply it burrows into the rural life it slowly reveals. Gaerlan was named Best Actor at the 2006 Philippine Independent Film Festival for his performance as the hard-cored boy, and writer Victor Acedillo is next for Best Screenplay. The movie's gazing sometimes reminds you why Ag-Ag wants out of his village, but the deeper it delves into his life, the more 'Batad' picks up speed."

Back home, "Batad," which picked up several nominations for the 4th Golden Screen awards, including Best Picture (Independent/Digital), will be shown from March 14 to 20 at SM Cinemas nationwide as part of the Cinemalaya series. "Batad" also stars Gina Alajar, Nonie Buencamino, Heidi Mendoza, AA Fernandez, Joe Gruta, Paulo O'Hara, Chris Formoso, Ronald Raga and Jeffrey Jegesa.

We're happy for Her—producer, screenwriter, director, talent scout, acting coach and Lord knows what else. She is one of our funniest friends. Phew, we were overwhelmed with a thousand and one things and couldn't reply to her e-mails, she wrote this line that had us laughing and made us uneasy: promo "Please, suggestions na naman."

Fundraiser

Also through e-mails from friends like Cindy Nieto and Boy Hayon, we learned that the Central Kalinga (CK) movie, "Pandoy"

RAMON SA

MARCEL Soriano in "Pandoy"

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Rodney V. Reynolds

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OPENS MARCH 21

RUSHES

Johnny Depp's daughter doing fine

LONDON—JOHNNY Depp's 7-year-old daughter, who has reportedly been receiving treatment in a British hospital, is "much better," the star's publicist said Thursday.

Britain's Daily Mirror newspaper reported Thursday that Lily-Rose, daughter of Depp and French singer Vanessa Paradis, was admitted to a hospital nine days ago and was in a serious condition. AP

Terminal

LOS ANGELES—Rock guitarist Slash, the Van Halen said on Thursday he would never rejoin the band, "no matter how much money is involved." The move appears to rule out a reunion by his former bandmates when they inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame next week. Reuters

Bardem & Allen

MADRID—Spain's former film star Javier Bardem is to join his compatriot Penelope Cruz in Woody Allen's new movie, he told Spain's El Pais newspaper on Thursday.

Asked about the role, Bardem said "It's something of a secret." Reuters

The real stars

JOHANNESBURG—In this—White horses, elephants and palms blowing south Sudan were to star in the film de tentials of actress Elizabeth Hurley who wrapped up a week of lavish wedding celebrations in India on Friday. Reuters

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G1	1	2	3 THE HITCHER	4 YOU GOT ME	
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	4 NOTES ON A SCANDAL	5 FLUSHED AWAY / LETTERS FROM IWO JIMA	6	7 YOU GOT ME	
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GB3	1	2			
	3 NOTES ON A SCANDAL	4 THE GOOD SHEPHERD	5 THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS		
ATC	1	2 THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS			
	3	4 YOU GOT ME	5 THE GOOD SHEPHERD		
ACC	1	2 THE HITCHER	3 IT'S A BOY GIRL THING	4 YOU GOT ME	
M2	1	2 THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS			
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The Asset Management Sector of the Philippine National Bank (PNB) is inviting bidders to purchase by way of sealed bids to cash or installment terms "As-is Where-is" basis the following mentioned condominium properties in Tagaytay City, Cavite (SPA):

1) 2 storey building with extension located in Old Nasugbu Road, Tagaytay City, lot area 510 sqm, improvements 120 sqm, extension 100 sqm, at Php1,530,000.00;

2) Adjacent lots with 2 storey building located in Don Domingo Subdivision, Tagaytay City, lot area 1,183 sqm, improvements 1,065 sqm, extension 100 sqm at Php 11,750,000.00.

Terms of Payment : 25% advance deposit to be paid as follows:
- 10% deposit upon submission of bids; 15% balance on deposit payable within seven (7) days from receipt of Notice of Approval.
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Terms and Conditions :
(1) Bidder's deposit and the "Purchase Proposal Form" (available at the branch offices and non-refundable) with the 10% deposit of the offer price;
(2) The 10% deposit should be in Manager's or Cashier's Check and payable to: PHILIPPINE NATIONAL BANK;
(3) As a general rule, "as-is where-is" basis (the company will not undertake repairs);
(4) If the bidder is a representative of a corporation, the representative must submit to the Bidding Committee a Secretary's certificate or a Special Power of Attorney (SPA) to represent the said corporation;
(5) PNB's decision to accept and award bidding is the winning bidder. The withdrawal of bids shall be allowed once the winning bid has been accepted and approved by PNB. Any withdrawal of bid by winning bidder shall result in forfeiture by PNB of deposit made;
(6) In the event the winning bidder failed to comply with the specified payment terms, the 10% deposit shall be forfeited in favour and the sale shall be automatically cancelled;
(7) PNB shall be responsible for the payment of 1% Gabaldon Withholding Tax (CWT) up to the selling price only, and any excess shall be for the account of the winning bidder. All other expenses such as documentary stamps, transfer tax, registration fees and others that which are related to the transfer of the title to the name of the winning bidder shall be for the account account of the winning bidder;
(8) PNB reserves the right to reject any or all bids in its sole discretion, waive any deficiency or information on the bids received and accept the bid most advantageous to PNB/bid best and guarantee fully serious and/or beneficial to same;
(9) PNB reserves the right to withdraw the offered property at any time before the deadline of submission of offers for any reasons;
(10) PNB does not assume any obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify any bidder for any expense that may be incurred by the bidding process.

Submission Procedure : The sealed offer must be labeled "Sugarapao Public Sealed Bidding Location of Property" (as so indicated above)"

Sealed offer and check mentioned must be submitted not later than 3:00 p. m., March 21, 2007 (Tuesday) to Ms. Honey G. Orosco (Jr. Administrative Staff Assistant, Philippine National Bank, Mezzanine floor, Tagaytay City, Cavite).

For clarifications please contact Theresa Arabia Ong, Assistant Vice President, Asset Management Sector at telephone number 413-2xx (5 lines) local 2402.

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R-13

NEVER PICKUP STRANGERS

'Batad' featured in San Jose ...

From page G1

will premiere in LA on March 31 at the Wadsworth Theater. This trilogy of movies stars Winford Sinclair, Cesar Montano, Alicia Davao, Michael V., Robert Arevalo, Carol Martin and Lilia Olivero.

This premiere and others to take place all over the US is fundraiser for Gawad Kalinga, a movement spearheaded by tycoon's Fil. Ignino of the Fair, Tony Meloto. Inquirer.net's story on Tony provides a good background about the gentleman's movement that hopes to radically rebuild the country one family at a time: "In the 1960s, the Philippines gave the world People Power—a gift that came forth from folks that has kept on bringing democracy the world over. In the 1990s, there began what the world has come to embrace as the next...necessary. Follow-up to People Power—a political action. If People Power was a means for reclaiming freedom, something would have to address the need to build a thriving, substantive democracy.

"What began in 1995 with an effort to build a single house for the members of the Tatalon family in Quezon City, living in a county of rusted GI sheets, cardboard boxes, plastic sheets and old tires, is now known as Gawad Kalinga. In the first decade of the present century, it has grown to represent the Philippines' own gift to humanity. Gawad Kalinga is becoming a global template for development...one that has expanded to Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and Cambodia, and that will soon open in East Timor, India, Nigeria and Nicaragua.

"And while Gawad Kalinga is about many people, its public face is that of one man: Tony Meloto."

Specifics

An e-mail by Fil-Am community leader Peony de la Cruz that was forwarded to me had the specifics: "Gawad Kalinga's goal is to build 100,000 houses in seven years in the Philippines, and has now received the support of folks in Canada, Australia, Malaysia and London in providing funds to build houses in the Philippines. GK's Tony Meloto is now going to Africa and other countries to help build houses for the poor, using the housing development template in the Philippines."

"Pamana" reflects GK's vision of hope, freedom and transformation. The movement's Web site provides synopses of the film's three stories:

"Unlipak Mata ang Langit (Even If Heaven Cries)" is based on Jacelyn's life experiences who lost loved ones in the landslide of St. Bernard, S. Leyte. The story captures the pain, the internal struggles and the healing that takes place in all of us once faced with life changing events.

"Ang Kapatid Kong Si Elvis (My Brother Elvis)" is a story on highest note, centered on a boy who are gambled to satisfy his hunger and a GK volunteer's family who adopted him as their own. The story captures the challenges and rewards of living in unfed with GK.

"Maria" is a story based on how a tragic loss can be turned into a living legacy and a new beginning. Maria Corazon Abad perished in the twin tower tragedy of 9/11. Rudy Abad honors his wife with a living legacy.

Far Iona

The film's stars, music score Rizza Cayabyab, executive producer Bobby Barrera, producers Step Gloria, Butch Bernardo and Tony Teatora and others involved reportedly waived their usual fees in the spirit of "bayanihan" to make "Pamana." Ed is also grateful to Lord Barrawillahoo and Cecy of United for valet.

"BATAS" star Nonie Buencamino

Maricel & Cesar have reportedly been invited to the LA preem but have not accepted

OPENS MARCH 14

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2 300
7 IT's A BOY GIRL THING
3 THE HITCHER
9 Indistinct: ROME and JULIET
4 DEAD PEOPLE 2
9 THE PURSUIT of HAPPYNESS
5 Reserved for VICTORY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
10 YOU GOT ME

ERMITA

1 300
2 IT's A BOY GIRL THING PRIMEVAL
6 THE HITCHER
3 A GOOD SHEPHERD
8 DEAD PEOPLE 2
4 YOU GOT ME
7 The PURSUIT of HAPPYNESS

METRO EAST

1 THE NUMBER 23 BRIDGE of TERABITHIA
5 PRIMEVAL GHOST RIDER
2 300
9 A GOOD SHEPHERD
3 YOU GOT ME
7 The PURSUIT of HAPPYNESS
4 THE HITCHER
8 DEAD PEOPLE 2

NOVALICHES

1 300
3 The PURSUIT of HAPPYNESS
2 YOU GOT ME
4 THE HITCHER

PIONEER

1 A GOOD SHEPHERD
3 The PURSUIT of HAPPYNESS
2 300
4 THE HITCHER

STA. ROSA

1 300
2 The PURSUIT of HAPPYNESS
3 THE CLEANER
4 IT's A BOY GIRL THING
5 YOU GOT ME

LIPA

1 GHOST RIDER
2 YOU GOT ME
3 THE NUMBER 23
4 THE FOUNTAIN
5 PRIMEVAL

DASMARINAS

1 FLUSHED AWAY
2 300
3 YOU GOT ME
4 The PURSUIT of HAPPYNESS

ANGELES

1 300
2 YOU GOT ME
3 FLUSHED AWAY
4 The PURSUIT of HAPPYNESS

IMUS

1 300
2 PRIMEVAL
3 The PURSUIT of HAPPYNESS
4 YOU GOT ME
5 FLUSHED AWAY

STARMILLS

1 The PURSUIT of HAPPYNESS
2 TROYA
3 YOU GOT ME
4 FLUSHED AWAY
5 300
6 PRIMEVAL

BACOLOD

1 300
2 THE SPIRIT TRAP
3 YOU GOT ME
4 LITTLE CHILDREN
5 PRIMEVAL
6 THE BESSIENDERS

ILOILO

1 300
2 YOU GOT ME
3 HANNIBAL RISING
4 PRIMEVAL
5 TROYA
6 FLUSHED AWAY

Lani, Gary V at Big Dome on March 17

SHOW TIME

SINGER LANI MISALUCHA teams up "Lani Misalucha... Missing You" at the Araneta Coliseum on March 17.

Her guests are Gary Valenciano, Freechie Uy and Nina Alawela.

"I will also be dancing in the show," Lani says. "With Gary V on stage, I can't just stand still."

Lani's repertoire includes the most-requested and multi-applauded numbers in her Las Vegas shows, as well as selections from her new self-titled album from Universal Records. Call 911-5555.

Concert repeat

A repeat of the pre-Valentine concert "Pinoy Pasion from Broadway, The Heartthrobs Concert" will be staged at the Aliw Theater on March 17.

The concert is produced by Star Records, Inc. in cooperation with ASAP Live Entertainment. Call 9115555.

Benefit show

Raymund Lindbergh brings back his recent "classic, humorous 3- whirling tin...Institute" to Tuesday at the Promenade in Greenhills Shopping Complex on March 15, 22, 29, April 12 and 19.

The concert, for the benefit of Bagets Foundation, which helps educate out-of-school youth, was organized by the original cast members of the '80s hit movie, "Bagets."

The concert features Raymund with an 8-piece band complete with live Strings and rhythm section under musical director Vic Otic. Call Ticketworld, 891-9999, Stubhub, 723-6728 or Bagets Foundation, 8930-5389804.

Concert series

Hard Rock Cafe features Mau in a special show on March 15, part of 98.5's and 96.3 Wish's monthly "Lanzeak at Hard Rock" series.

Other performers are: Side A band, March 17; Imperial Stable reggae band Apple, March 22; and Nyoy Volante, March 23.

Regular performers are Jim Paredes and Moonjoni, Fe Imutan (Tuesdays), Flamenco (Wednesdays), Mojacoy (Thursdays), Infinity (Fridays) and Hyper-Sonic (Saturdays).

Doors open at 9:30 p.m. Call 955-8663 to 64.

March 13

Bale Adriatico at KTV bar

Betsy Penades at Mark's Bar Shoes, Greenhill 3

March 14

RJ with the Motion Riders Band at KTV bar

March 15

RJ and Orange and Lemon at Cayetano's Bar, Hamilton Oriental

Bears at Mark's Bar Shoes, Greenhill 3

March 17

Steve Otic at Mark's Bar & Shoes, Greenhill 3

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ENTERTAINMENT

Once again, The Engineer

FILIPINO SINGER and actor Lea Teresita Salonga, left, rehearses on March 8 in the cast and crew of the Broadway hit, "Miss Saigon," prepare for their March 17 opening night at Her Majesty's Theatre in Melbourne.

Salonga plays the Engineer, a role for her done over 2,000 times in various international productions in five countries.

In 1995, almost 750,000 people saw the Cameron Mackintosh spin in Sydney's Capitol Theatre during a year-and-a-half run. AFP

SHANG CINEPLEX

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Willie to bare all on 'Sharon'

TONIGHT, TV HOST WILLIE REVILLAME will answer controversial issues in a tearful one-on-one interview with host Sharon Cuneta on ABS-CBN's "Sharon."

Willie will clarify issues about his rivalry with Eat Bulaga!'s Tito, Vic and Joey, Oh Ultra tragedy, his daughter Hiraya's separation and estranged wife Liz Alcaraz.

To talk about Willie are his good friends Randy Santiago, Boobay and composer Lito Camo.

The episode airs after "Juana C."

Meanwhile, on March 15, 9 p.m., ABS-CBN's music channel airs "MOR Presents Gary Valenciano."

The award-winning stage and recording artist performs cuts from his latest album, "Inspired" (Sony/BMG).

Love will be accompanied by The Global Studio Orchestra, conducted by his brother, Gerard Salonga. (He is currently in Broadway enjoying the role of Narrator in "Les Miserables."

Simple ang ligaya, masarap kasama.

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Ordinary individuals across the globe with extraordinary abilities. The super saga is now on Philippine Television.

Based on Tyra Banks's reality program America's Next Top Model 3,000 girls auditioned. Now, meet the 14 candidates. Who among them can exude the top model attitude? Hosted by Ruffa Gutierrez-Bektas.

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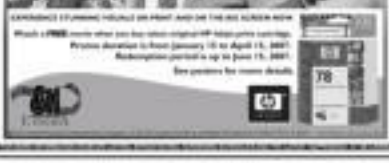

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

New love team makes its bid

NEWCOMERS FOR TOMORROW FILM YEAR CONtinue to be introduced to viewers by "Happy Heart," the TV tandem of Rayver Cruz and Shaina Magdayao is finally given a stellar vehicle for the wide screen.

They have to share top billing with Bernard Palanca and Meynard Brahms, but they provide the film's youthful component, as all eyes are on them. Will they click with viewers as "total movies" latest hot love team?

We hope they make it, because we've had our eyes on them for years now as potential young stars who have what it takes to be TV film performers for more than a few trendy seasons.

Shaina started in the hit series Sana Bayan. She first attracted some attention as a child singer—Miss Morrisey' petite younger sister! That was a good start for the kiddie performer.

In time, however, her Ate Vilma connection turned out to be a liability, because Shaina wasn't able to shine (as past intended) on her own. It took her a long time to outlast her own kind of attention.

Now that she's a teenager, however, Shaina is in a better position to make her own kind of impression. She looks good and still sings well, so things are looking up.

She seems, however, that Shaina lacks personal desire and commitment to her career. Her ambition is rather on the soft side, hence the lack of genuine excitement and fire in her performances. We hope that she does something about this soonest, so she can make a younger impact on the big and small screens.

For his part, Rayver Cruz has no problem in the ambition and commitment departments. It's clear from his acting and musical performances that he's eager to do his best, he's eating to entertain his audiences, and he keeps honing his skills.

As an actor and dancer, Rayver has proven that he's better than most young talents. Beyond individual skills, Rayver's total presence as a performer is captivating because he's brimming with zest and enjoyment. This is no shy, hesitant or clueless talent, that's for sure.

How do Rayver and Shaina come off as a love team? Well, they do pretty much what most teen love teams do, making goo-goo eyes at each other for maximum tilig impact on fans.

In time, we hope that their become more intuitive and up for a feisty style, though at the standard giggles and schizoid sweet nothings, a wrapper-William-Hurd relationship would be less cloying and definitely more interesting.

But good parties of their worth as a love team, we'll have to wait for "Happy Hearts" to start its run soonest. Let's hope the results are as happy as anticipated!

NYC workshops

The New Voice Company will hold its annual summer Theater Workshops from April 30 to May 26. Classes offered: Musical Theater for Teens and Musical Theater for Adults.

Call NYC at 896-6695 or e-mail nyc@hotmail.net.

The company is also announcing auditions for its 2007 musical, "Into the Woods," with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and book by James Lapine, on March 17 and 18 at the NYC Arhon Studio from 2 to 6 p.m. The award-winning musical will be directed by Rio Ardo and will run at Music Museum from June 9 to July 8.

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